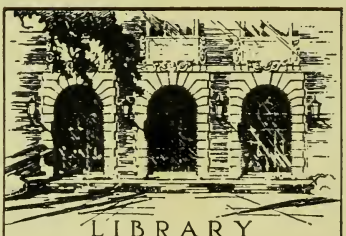

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TOM BOWLING.

VOL. I.

Frederic Chamier.

TOM BOWLING:

A Tale of the Sea.

BY

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AUTHOR OF

"THE LIFE OF A SAILOR," "THE SPITFIRE,"

"JACK ADAMS," ETC.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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TOM BOWLING.

CHAPTER I.

IN WHICH IS A DESCRIPTION OF TOM BOWLING'S SUPPOSED BIRTH, PARENTAGE, AND EDUCATION.

"It's no use saying that a seaman shall only drink his allowance of grog. Ever since I was the size of a top maul I took to the liquor just as regularly as a horse to his evening's bucket of water, and the more my father tried to correct the disease, the more inveterately it grew upon me."

"Why, Tom, your father was no sailor."

"That's true; but he liked his glass for all that. I remember when he was very ill indeed, that

he refused the assistance of one of the best doctors in the parish, merely because the man would not drink a drop with him ; and he carried his prejudice so far, that for fear of offending him I was obliged to drink myself. Well, he got worse and worse, when luckily a kind of mafrodite man, something between a German doctor and an English mountebank, came to buy a dog,—for, do you see, my father rather took a fancy to gentlemen's dogs, and was so kind that he fed and kept them for nothing when they came on a visit to him. 'Well,' said the German, 'you are looking confounded ill, Mr. Hanson, and I should like to buy that Scotch terrier before you die.'

"'Thank, you, Sir,' said my father. 'Tom, hand the gemmen some of No. 1 out of the closet there. I'll part with the terrier for a trifle to you, but I don't think it would hunt safely near Enfield ; do you understand. It's the finest creature after vermin of that kind as ever lived. Tom, you sponge,—you gallon-measure,—you hogshead,—take the bottle from your lips. Help the company first,—then don't forget your

father;—you've no more religion than the Newfoundland puppy that came home last night. There, doctor, that's stuff as never saw a custom-house officer; it came from Deal in a squall of wind which lasted from the time it landed until it got here; there's no more water in that than in a dry ditch in summer; not enough for a frog to swallow, to keep life and soul together. I'm very ill, doctor, very; I wants your advice.'

"'Why,' said the doctor, 'there's Mr. Volatily, who is so clever and benevolent a man.'

"'I wont sell you the dog, not for its weight in gold, if you talk of that benevolent man again. What's the use of benevolence if a man wont drink a glass with a friend who is going out of the world; I'll take your physic, and you shall take your choice of my dogs—that's a bargain. Tom, give the doctor another glass; help him as you do yourself;—and now I shall soon get well.'

"'No, no, Mr. Hanson,' said the doctor; 'I'll buy your dogs, give you my best advice, drink a glass, or smoke a pipe with you; but I wont

deceive you. The best of doctors could only prolong your sufferings, by keeping you a few weeks alive ; but die you must, and that shortly ; so take my advice, make your mind up to it, send for a clergyman, and endeavour to go to your grave with an easy conscience.'

" ' Tom, take the liquor away,' cried my father ; ' the doctor's drunk as an owl.'

" ' Come, Mr. Hanson,' said the doctor, ' its no use putting the blinker over the eye of the question,'—for sometimes the German when he was a little angry forgot his Sunday's English. ' I have bought dogs of you frequently, and you never sold me a bad one. I know all about your mode of life, and the tyfel,—there is a tyfel,—Mr. Hanson, will recollect the yelp of all your dogs, and remember you of their names by and by. Now a clergyman can settle all this for you. I can only patch up your body, but the black gentleman—I mean the clergyman—can patch up your mind, your conscience, and let you lie your head on your pillow comfortably and quietly. Take my physic in the morning, but see the clergyman at noon.'

"'Well, sir,' said my father, 'you confound me—you bother me. How is the parson to rub off the names of my dogs from the books of the devil? I tell you, I never saw a parson but twice in my life, and that was rat-catching—and he spoke for all the world just like another man. Well, sir, I'm not afraid of him, and if he comes to-morrow, I'll see him, provided he'll drink a small drop with me.'

"'Nonsense, man, nonsense,' said the German, interrupting him; 'don't talk in that strain. In a few days you will be summoned from this world, and I tell you the time is very short between this and your coffin; and when once you are placed in that narrow house, it is too late for repentance. Your life has been one of crime, and the only favourable circumstance in it is the fact that your son Tom there has been brought up properly, and never was concerned in your various depredations.'"

Here a loud shout of laughter from all the yarn listeners on the forecastle, at the good character Tom gave of himself, resounded even to the quarterdeck. Tom blushed,—he had a blush

or two left; but he was cheered on by his shipmates calling upon him to tell the history of his early life; and the end of his father, whose exit was anything but satisfactory.

It was, however, the first time his shipmates ever knew that Tom Bowling, the favourite of the ship, the most daring "devil-may-care fellow" of the whole crew, ever came from so very bad a stock as a dog-stealer of St. Giles's.

"Go on Tom, my boy,—don't blush so," said a fellow, whose long tail and bushy whiskers gave the very beau ideal of a sailor some sixty years past,—"what does it signify who your father was; if he had been better than you, why then I'm blessed if you would not have been like a potatoe, the best part of you under ground; whereas now you'r like the tall spars of a line-of-battle-ship, seen first and last, above the hull that bore you, with a good character for carrying your canvass like a stout spar through every squall; so go on, and keep that blush for pretty Susan when we get into harbour."

"Bravo Dick,—well said, my lad,—it's all

true; Tom Bowling is just as fine a fellow as ever stepped between stem and stern of any craft between Iceland and Cape Horn."

"Well, I'll tell you all about it, lads," said Tom. "The German doctor, who would have made a horse laugh from his mimicry of any man's face, (he was about five-and-twenty, and often clapped his hat over his head and looked seventy,) twisting his mouth as like my father as if it had been drawn by a painter, said,—'Now, Mr. Hanson, just look at yourself, and see if you think you can last a fortnight.' My father burst out a laughing, told him to take the terrier, and to send his physic; and, as the German walked out of the room, he said,—'I'll send you the physic and the clergyman; take in the first, but don't deceive the other. Good bye, Mr. Hanson. Here, Tom, I want to speak to you. Don't you give your father any more brandy, and take less yourself. Get me the terrier, and I'll call to-morrow.'

"My father never closed his eyes all that blessed night; he was rubbing up his memory, and making long speeches, all of which he in-

tended for the parson. He hired a maid-servant to scrub the room; and although he had ever professed the greatest contempt for any one of the black cloth, yet now, with death near at hand, and with the assurance that the reverend gentleman might assuage one or two most uncomfortable reminiscences——"

"Stop, Tom, a moment, what ships are those—'the Assuageon and the Reminisent,'—I never heard of them in any fleet under Benbow, Vernon, Keppel, or Anson. Perhaps it's the Dragon and the Rhinoceros you mean."

"Tom's a schoolard, Bill," observed another; "he's only larding his English with a bit of Spanish, or a touch of that German doctor's lingo; let him make sail, and we shall understand somehow or other on which tack the fleet were standing before the action with the parson began."

"I beg your pardon, lads," said Tom Bowling; "I meant to say that the parson would take the rounding off the cable of his conscience, which was chafed by always riding out life in a constant gale of wind, and that he

would be able to return it to the dock-yard above as good as when he first drew it from the store."

"That's as right as a trivet," cried Bill; "that's a lingo every man can fathom; there's none of your dictionary words which would puzzle a Philadelphia lawyer, but real plain upright and downright, like a donkey's fore-leg — good intelligible English. Start a-head, Tom."

"Well, lads, as I was a saying, when my father heard that the parson could do all this for him, he was determined not to let him work for nothing; so he ordered lots of good things, some fresh brandy, got the house clean, clapped on some new rigging, and put the skins of some of his dogs which had died before he could sell them as a kind of a mat for the parson to put his feet on. I was dressed up in a new suit, bought for the occasion, with a large shirt collar turned down like a charity boy at Sunday muster, with enough ribbon in my shoes to have made a tie for the tail of Benbow's bowman of the barge.

"The physic came first; that was swallowed after a few faces, and was washed down with a raw nip of brandy that would have startled the boatswain. I tried to stop his grog, according to the doctor's orders; but he let out a squall of words which frightened me; and when I told him that Mr. Volatily, the benevolent doctor, said he was coming to see him, he turned round as quiet as a child, and, says he, 'Tom, my boy, just go and let Pincher loose, and I'm mistaken if that benevolent doctor comes near me; just clap Pincher on the staircase, and be alive, after he has bit the doctor, to tie him up again, or he'll eat the parson altogether. Go, Tom, that's a good boy; let the dog loose, and talk to him about physic.'

"I thought the best way was to go to Mr. Volatily myself, and tell him who was standing sentinel over the hatchway. That was enough for him, although the good man tapped me on the shoulder, and, says he, 'Tom, your father's just as great a brute as his dog, and he may die and be d—d for me.'

"'Thank you,' says I, 'that's kind of you, to

let a man die in peace; they say you are the most benevolent man in the parish, and I'm sure my father will think so too, although you never will take a drop of brandy with him. I'll tell him what you say, and I beg leave to thank you for him.' So I took off my hat, made the benevolent apothecary a low bow, ran home, tied up Pincher, and delivered the message to my father, who was quite pleased at being allowed to die and be d—d without interruption.

"It was about eleven o'clock that we heard a bit of a rumpus down stairs, and I looked over the railings to see what it was; when I saw a stranger ascending the hatchway as slowly as a purser in a hot day in the West Indies. He had got a black sack over him, and wore two pieces of white linen hanging from his neck, for all the world as if he had cut off the weekly account of a midshipman, and let them dangle from his neck;—he hove too once or twice to take breath; for he never had been so far aloft before. I told my father what was coming up stairs; and, says he, 'It's a parson, Tom; I hope none of the dogs is loose.'

"Well, at last he got to the landing-place, and I never ran away, not an inch, although Mr. Monckton was there. I've often thought that was the most resolute moment of my life.

"'What, had you never seen a parson before, Tom?' asked one of the group.

"'Never, that I know of.'

"'Does one Mr. Hanson live up here?' said the clergyman.

"'Yes, sir,' said I: as I made a slant towards the door.

"'I wish he did not live quite so high up,' said the visitor, 'for it's hard work to march up so many steps. Is he dying?'

"'I thought he would have died,' said I, 'this morning; but since he's heard the doctor's not coming, I think he looks better.'

"The parson looked at me, as much as to say you are a sweet nut for the devil to crack; and after having got enough wind in him to serve for breath, he pushed me on one side, and came close up to my father's bed; he looked at him steadfastly for some time, and then, recollecting himself, said, 'Why, to be sure, you are

the very man who stole my dog, and was tried for it!'

"'Ay, your Reverence,' said my father, 'that's all true enough; and I'm heartily sorry for it, although it was my trade,—and business must be attended to. Now, the German doctor says that I have not long to live; that he can only comfort my body,—(Tom, you young blackguard, keep your beak out of that bottle,)—that boy, your Reverence, would drink a gallon of brandy before he had the civility to ask a stranger to take a glass. Well, Sir, it's about my soul that I want to speak. The doctor said it was all in the spirit line, and that you were the best man in the world to see if it was proof, genuine, unadulterated, pure, neat; and so I took the liberty to ask for your company; and I hope you'll find the brandy good.'

"The old gentleman, after listening attentively to the length of the yarn my father had spun, now began to talk a little.

"'You miserable man,' he said, 'at this awful moment, when the angel of life is holding you over the depths of eternal misery by a

single hair, do you speak thus? Do you imagine that your long catalogue of crime, although it has been unseen by an earthly, will be overlooked by a heavenly judge? An eye has watched you from your infancy—every action is recorded; and when in a few hours you stand before Him who knows every secret of your heart, how will you bear to hear your eternal condemnation?'

"'Tom,' said my father, as he trembled all over, 'tell Bob to take back the large Newfoundland dog, and bring the reward; and those other ones which lost their way in the dark, and came here for shelter, turn them out, with their heads in the right direction. Put your ear close, your Reverence; I shall be easier when I have told you all about him there—he's not my child; I *found* him.'

"'Whose child is he?' asked the parson.

"'I can't say, seeing as how I don't know; but he is a gentleman, as you can tell from his taking his liquor so cordially.'

"I never remember to have seen my father overcome by any set of words before; the per-

spiration ran down his face in streams, and he breathed so heavily that I offered him some brandy.

"'No, Tom,' he said; 'no, no more of that for me; give it to his Reverence; it will make him talk again, and I think he does me good.'

"'Can you pray?' said the parson.

"'Yes, Sir,' replied my father, as meekly as a child.

"'What kind of prayer do you use,—the Lord's prayer?'

"'No, your Reverence; it's one I often used for dark nights.'

"'There is no night of darkness, man, like your soul's; and I should ill perform my duty if I flattered you with pardon; even at the last moment before the last breath, the last sigh leaves the expiring man, some hope may gladden the eye; but you offer no repentance for past crimes—your heart is seared in iniquity—there is no hand held in imploring prayer to Him who has said, "Come unto me, all ye who are heavy laden;" but with brutal indifference, with a recklessness incomprehensible, you plunge headlong

into that hell of darkness which is yawning to receive you; lift up those guilty hands, and let your sinful lips repeat these words.' I watched Mr. Monckton, who knelt down by his side; an awful fear came over me, and I fell on my knees by the foot of the bed: my father's hands were held together, and in this attitude, whilst endeavouring to reach higher and higher as the words of the clergyman fell upon his ears, he gave one sudden convulsive shake, his arms fell by his side, his lower jaw opened, and he was dead!

"The clergyman saw it all, but he continued praying for him that was gone; and when he rose he pointed to the corpse and said, 'Be this an useful lesson to you; and as you toil on through this dreary pilgrimage on earth, remember there is an eye which never slumbers, an ear which is ever attentive! And when, fatigued with life's journey, you lay down your staff, may Heaven grant your last hour be not like this,—your only prayer cut short, your faltering voice stifled! Leave this abode when your duty to him you believed your father is done;

seek a new life ; become useful to your king and your country, and by your conduct obliterate the remembrance of his !' The gentleman then shook me by the hand, and saying, ' May the seed of righteousness fall on fruitful ground,' he slowly descended the stairs. I watched him ; I cannot tell you the sensations I felt,—a child might have felled me to the ground ; my knees could scarcely support me, and at last I fell down at the head of the stairs.

" My father had money enough to procure a proper burial, and the clergyman who saw him die, read the last prayer over him. He beheld me crying over the grave, and when he finished he took me by the hand,—for I had a decent set of rigging over my mast-head,—and he led me to his house.

" ' This is the lad, Anna,' he remarked to his wife, ' take care of him.' I dare say I might have been happy had I remained with him all the days of my life,—if I had worked for him like a slave, but it was ordained otherwise, and here I am. From the moment I was taken into the clergyman's house, I was put to school with some other lads younger than myself. The

lady heard us our lessons three times a day; and although I attended in the house as a servant, I was always obliged to be at my station in school. Her daughter, a girl of my own age, first taught me my letters, and the first word I ever wrote was 'Susan.'

"When my father died I was only ten years of age. The clergyman sold the property, and I'm afraid to say how much my kind master told me was left to me,—not as his son, but under the name of Thomas Bowling. He might have told me of guineas as plentiful as cowries in Africa, but I never saw one. I worked hard for my wages, which were regularly paid. I had clothes given me; and what made me a greater favourite was, the manner in which I went a-head in my books. I was never without them, and whenever I had a moment to spare I set to work to read or to write. Susan, the clergyman's daughter, called me her pupil; and at all the examinations at the school I used to see her eyes glisten as she said, when one lad could not answer the question, 'Ask young Bowling, papa, he knows it well enough!'

"I remained at this work until I was twelve,

during which time I had learnt to read and write properly,—had been to church twice every Sunday, and knew the Prayer-book by heart. I was a stout looking lad of my age, and whenever Miss Susan wanted anything done she seemed to like to ask me to do it; for whenever she spoke, my ears were always wide open.

"There was no man more respected in the parish than the clergyman; but I fear he was not always so great a friend to himself as to his parishioners. He always gave away more than he ought to have given, because he had a wife and daughter to live after his death. He was very stout built, and somehow I always had an idea that a stout man makes a greater impression upon a society when he speaks, than a skeleton whose jaws you can hear rattle.

"It was one Sunday evening in July, the weather was as hot as at Port Royal in August, that the clergyman, after coming home from the service, looked very pale and ill. His wife saw it in a moment, and the daughter soon caught the alarm. It was as much as my master could do to reach his chair before he fell

into a fit. I ran directly for the German doctor, who was then a man of great practice, and he drove to the house directly. The other servant in the house had gone for Volatily, and they both arrived at the same moment. One began to cut away at my poor master's head, to open the artery, whilst the other set to work at both arms. Never did I see more courage in a man than was shewn by the wife and Susan. It's an ugly sight is blood, when flowing down a face we have often loved, revered, and caressed! But they witnessed the sight without flinching; there was a determination to do their duty, which seemed to have dried their eyes,—for women oftentimes cry and work, and as they cry work the harder. But here was nothing of the sort; it was all a kind of fevered despair, without a beam of hope,—and they had learnt their duty from him who now received at their hands the benefit of his own Christian instruction.

"A blister was ordered to be put on the nape of the neck, and Volatily prepared and cut it—but the clergyman's wife put it on. She patted it down more tenderly I thought than the

apothecary would have done; and wherever the pain was most likely to be intense, there was the small hand of Susan to assuage it.

"The German doctor was a man of great feeling. To the hurried questions which were asked with scarcely intermission, he answered as softly as a girl. He gave hope, without inspiring a perfect confidence; and to the imploring eye of the daughter he had a soothing response. I was by the bedside, and I watched there for five hours; the good old man never spoke but in a whisper, first to his wife, and then a long time to his daughter. During that time Susan was on her knees in fervent prayer. Yes, and I knelt by the death bed of him who perhaps had saved me from a life as disreputable as my reputed father's. It was then I remembered the words of the clergyman when my father died, and I thought of the difference of the scene here. In the midst of his family, surrounded by those who loved him, warm from the church where he had offered up his prayers, —his sickness occasioned by the exertion used to call others to repentance,—the good man

received the benedictions of all who surrounded his bed, and lay in silent calmness awaiting the last command.

"It was not until long after the first shock that either wife or daughter shed a tear; but when they burst out, they wept for hours. But there was no complaining; they seemed wonderfully supported. No thought occurred of the future privations they were destined to experience; every thought was for him; every action to assuage his pain. It was about eleven the next morning that the old gentleman spoke, and gave us hopes of his recovery. He seemed, however, to be aware that death was lingering in the room, and he sent for an attorney to arrange some few matters. They mostly concerned me; for all his worldly wealth would die with him, and his furniture be the fortune of his wife. I heard my name mentioned often.

"The attorney being gone, the wife and daughter read prayers to him, during which he fell off again. The doctor had from the first but little hope; and now it was evident he had still less. He prepared the family for the

blow so near at hand, and with great feeling declared his incompetency to ward it off. He urged them to place their hope in a higher power, and resign themselves to the calamity, according to the lesson ever inculcated, with Christian resignation. So indeed they did. They watched with all affection; there was no moment when the eye was withdrawn from the patient; and his last breath was exhaled between the wife and the daughter. At his funeral a long train of sincere friends attended him to his grave, and his loss was severely felt and regretted.

" It appeared that I was now to be under the direction of the German doctor, who gave me to understand that I was shortly to be removed to school. It was another trial of strength. I had to part with those who had taught me all I knew; who had rescued me from a life of shame; and who had fed and clothed me. I was resolved not to make my first farewell my last, and therefore I said ' Good bye' to Susan, who looked lovelier than ever in her mourning, and I took up my abode at the doctor's. Here

I found myself treated more as a gentleman; for during the three days I was in the house I dined every day with my guardian. The fourth day I was packed off to school; but I had been told by the doctor that whenever I should come to the age of one-and-twenty, I should be able to live like a lord, and drive a one-horse shay. Amongst other matters, he told me of the distress which the widow and the daughter would experience; and being a man of the world, and having I suppose known that when people become poor they are very much pitied and left to starve, he ventured to say that without Susan got a place, and the widow worked like a pedlar's donkey, one would soon be ruined, and the other buried.

"I have no doubt it was my thinking of the wretchedness of their situation that procured me no less than four floggings the first week I was at school, and I dare say I should have got four more the next week if I had not taken the liberty of burning my master's rods, and of walking off with myself. I was the companion of another boy, who was of my own age, and who had

bothered his father to send him to sea, wishing to carve out his own misery, in direct defiance of his father, who was going to send him to India to make a large fortune in a few years, and enable him to come home with a liver complaint and a yellow face.

"We *never* know what is best for ourselves in this world—never; I remember a magistrate at Portsmouth saying as much to a man who was brought before him for stealing poultry. 'I think the best thing I can do,' said the culprit, 'is to go home to my mother and live a better life.' 'Depend upon it,' said the magistrate, 'you are quite wrong; the best place for you is the gaol. Take him away for three months.' My first visit after I had ventured to draw breath and look behind me was to the widow and to Susan. A change had taken place in the house, for there was no servant, half the furniture seemed gone, and I knew enough of what had been to know the truth of the doctor's observation; they had the rent to pay, without the means, but by the sale of their

goods; and their hands never having been accustomed to work, they felt the advances of poverty without the power of warding it off. I had only two shillings in my pocket.

CHAPTER II.

IN WHICH IS SHEWN THE TRUTH OF THE PERSIAN REMARK, THAT "A BLACK BOY MAY RETURN WITH A WHITE FACE."

"I DID not dare go back to the doctor's, and I had to find out a mode of getting my bread; that was all arranged in my mind. I was mad to go to sea, and I knew half a score of songs quite historical enough to prove that sailors were the happiest men in the world; made money as surely as their enemies had ships; were always in love; and passed their lives with a grog-bottle by their side, and a song on their lips. So my mind was made up: on that evening

I would sleep on board a vessel in the river, and trust to the generosity of the crew to give me something to eat.

"Susan was very kind to me. She hoped the good lesson inculcated by her father and herself would never be lost upon me; she told me that now she had to practise that patience and resignation which she had ever taught, to comfort her poor mother in her affliction, and to work for her support. But in this trying circumstance she would cheerfully do her duty; that the hour of toil was the happiest, since it prevented her thinking of times past, and she knew the termination of her work would be the means of providing her poor mother with food. I looked at her—that is, I tried to see her, but my eyes swam in tears. She saw it; she bade me not fear for her, but in my future life to remember that my prosperity would be welcome intelligence to her; and that any proof of honourable conduct would be the most acceptable news which could reach her. She thought of me, not of herself; and when I told her that, whichever way the wind might set, the remem-

brance of her would ride on the breeze, she shook me by the hand, and went to another room. I put the two shillings on the table, and left a scrap of paper on which I said I wished it had been two hundred pounds; that I was gone to sea; and that they might pay me when I came back.

"I walked out of that room the happiest boy in England, without a rap in the world, without a friend, for my schoolfellow had been picked up by a relation whilst waiting for me; and with a heart as light as a feather, and a stomach very clamorous, I steered a course to Tower Hill, and by four o'clock in the afternoon was a cabin-boy on board of a collier, under the name of Tom Bowling,—had washed the captain's tumbler, wiped his plate, and given him his long-shore-going-coat, after which I got something to eat, and I slept like a top.

"There, my lads; there is a yarn long enough for any man to spin in one night."

"Not a bit of it, Tom. Why, you have not told us anything; let's hear how you came on board a man-of-war,—what became of Susan,

bless her little heart!—and how she lived. Why, my lad, you tip us a stave about your learning and your dogs, but you leave out the women and the love; we have half an hour more, and a boy's adventure, as you call it, always does my heart good to hear, particularly when the wind has set dead in his teeth, and he has been able to work to windward of every rock and shoal, and come safely to anchor, without having scraped off his character in the shallows."

"There are many of us, I dare say," resumed Tom, "who began life in a collier, with a face as black as a hat, and with heart as sick as such a life could cause. They were clearing the cargo when I entered; and young as I was, and comparatively weak, I was not allowed to be idle. I believe I did all the work of the vessel myself, and although I might be called a cabin, yet I hailed for the 'ship's boy;' but when the vessel was cleared and washed, and we had all changed our faces and become white, the crew became discontented because they had nothing to do; whilst they worked they were happy, when they

were idle they became miserable; and, my lads, I think we all know this to be a fact, that whenever a man becomes idle he gets into mischief. I was never idle; a cabin-boy in a collier has never time enough to wash his own hands without he does it when he cleans the tea-things; but although I was employed, I was not happy. I kept thinking of Susan, and every now and then made up my mind to take French leave and visit her; but then I thought that she would pay the two shillings, and that would distress her and myself also, so somehow or other I made up my mind to be contented in my situation, and clapping on a smile of contentment, worked away like a galley-slave.

"We sailed with a poor crew enough; we were 'the Empty Bottle,' a light collier, bound to the northward, and being light, we pitched about at every sea. I got over sea-sickness better than many others, for after the first four hours I was kicked and thrashed until I forgot it, and it left me for ever. We were not two days from the river before we were boarded by a cutter, and the crew mustered. We had

exactly our number; but the officer declared one or so less would be no inconvenience. He asked us if we would volunteer for the navy; and although each man looked as if it was an offer to go into the worst slavery, which he hardly dared refuse, lest he should be pressed, they all muttered out a most decided 'no,' and the officer continued his offer.

"'Why you young handsome fellow,' he began, as he addressed me, 'are you going to spend your best days with a black face in a collier, when you might be a vice-admiral of the red in twenty years?'

"I looked at him with great delight; it was the first word of encouragement I had received.

"Wont you volunteer for the king's service, my lad?' he continued; 'that's the place where merit is always rewarded, and where the young and the active get into notice and promotion. Why, I should be ashamed, if I were you, to spend my life in going for coals and taking them back again; washing up tea-cups, and cleaning other people's shoes; doing nothing for yourself, and being kicked for your neighbours.

Go on board a man-of-war; be a sailor in reality; make prize-money; laugh and sing; drink grog, and christen the cat.'

"I said I should have no objection.

"'Objection!' said he, with a stare as long as if I had asked him for some money or spoken Greek to him; 'objection! why, if you knew what I offered you, the fortune which I am putting within your grasp, the pleasure I am proffering, you would fall down on your knees and thank me with tears in your eyes.'

"'Oh Lord!' said one of the men near me; 'that man would talk a school-boy out of his bread and butter.'

"'Go look at yourself in a glass, my lad,' continued this crimp; 'see what a gallant fellow you would be in a pair of epaulettes; fancy yourself an admiral, commanding a fleet, surrounded by your officers, the flag of your enemy just lowered, his sword placed in your hand, your crew cheering their brave commander, and then look at this dirty collier, and say, If I slaved on for forty years, I could not expect to command even this.'

" ' I'll enter,' said I.

" ' That's enough, my lad; put this shilling in your pocket, hand up your chest and bag, and there's the boat.'

" ' Ah,' said the captain of the collier; ' he wont sink the boat with the baggage. A precious fool you are, Bowling ! An admiral ! my eyes and limbs, but you'll be without your shirt, lashed to the gratings, long before ever you walk on even the lee-side of the quarter-deck. it's all too late now ; you have taken the bounty. There's the boat, and there's another shilling for you, which you may return me with five per cent. interest when you are an admiral. Stupid boy, to be gulled by a parcel of words.'

" When I was ready, I went to shake hands with my shipmates. ' Good bye, admiral,' said one. ' Hope your honour wont forget an old shipmate,' said another. ' Admiral Bowling, your barge is alongside,' said a third, and all hands burst out a laughing ; but when they saw that I was crying, being quite unable to comprehend their banter, they shook my hand and comforted me. So it was, my lads, that three

days after I left the Thames in a collier, I was a volunteer in the service on board the cutter, which, having made a considerable haul from other vessels, was now standing towards the Medway to discharge her cargo at Chatham."

A youngster is like wet clay — you may mould him anyways. Some take the cast of rather an ugly shape, and never turn out well in life; others catch better forms and images, and become great men; whilst by far the greater numbers rush into neither extremes, but go down the great river of life, swept unobserved by its current, and, lost in the great ocean of eternity without a name, are obliterated entirely from memory. Out of the eight hundred millions of people who inhabit the earth, for a period of twenty years, about ten will be remembered in the page of history as great or striking characters. The middling lords are quite unnoticed; and only four or five hundred persons famous for crimes, daring villanies, or mischievous legislation, make for themselves a notoriety and a name. Such is existence, and such is the end of fame.

" Every one first emerging into life has hope for his lighthouse, and ambition for his pilot. How few round the point where hidden shoals and sunken rocks occasion the whirlpool of destruction? Even when safe from the fury of the storm, and past the boiling surf of dangers, they are assailed by the ever-ready wind of detraction, or the poisoned breeze of slander, leaving it to the last a doubt, whether the middle course is not the best, as above detraction, and beneath envy; but who would, when young, rob his heart of its best wishes, of its ambition? and yet, when attained, where is the happiness?

" I very soon found," continued Bowling; " that it was not all gold that glittered. I certainly was not placed in any condition on board the cutter likely to make me think that my promotion to an admiral was the natural consequence of my entering the service; and however much I might have been kicked and cuffed on board the collier, it was mere child's play to that which followed on board my new vessel. I was merely a boy, but I was every one's boy, and it

is better to serve under one despotic master than under a dozen slaves who believe themselves free. Everybody conceived I was his slave; and it was in vain I remarked that I had volunteered for the service of the king—not for the service of his seamen; but I had much better have kept my remarks to myself, as they only procured me more kicks and cuffs.

"'Never mind, youngster,' said one of the old birds employed to decoy the young ones; 'take it easy, grin, and bear it; you can't strike the hoop of a cask without bruising your knuckles, or stumble over a scraper without hurting your ancles. In a week you will be as hard as a two-and-thirty pound shot, and you wont feel when any one hits you. Patience, my lad; patience and perseverance; a marling-spike and a fid of grease, and you'd get your little finger into the touch-hole of a gun; so patience and perseverance, as the parson says, and you'll soon push your way as well as the best.'

"I fancy that old fellow's voice now, croaking in my ear, and saying, 'Take an old sea-

man's advice, and remember it whenever you feel down-hearted: the longest day will have an end, and though it's cloudy in the morning, the sun may shine bright enough at noon for the master to take an observation!' Its owing to always thinking of this fellow's advice that I have steered clear of the gangway, and never had an angry word from my officers. And many's the time that the darkest cloud has cleared away, and left a smile on the captain's face. There, my lads, I'm off to my hammock. To-morrow morning, and I shall be in the cutter going for fresh beef. The wind is fair, the Ram Head is in sight, and Plymouth Sound will see us at daylight!"

Tom Bowling was even then 'the darling of the crew;' for he was ever ready to do a kindness. He was a brave, generous, open-hearted lad, and, like all youngsters in the navy, he was in love, and with his Susan. Something tempted him to write to her, for he had never seen her since he left the money on the table. But then he thought how useless it would be, since he had no idea of her residence; and although she

had said how happy she should be to receive a letter, yet, boy like, he feared to write it. He was now eighteen years of age, a well-made, handsome, young man. He had ever amused his leisure hours by reading, and unlike his shipmates, who generally availed themselves of all idle moments to sleep, he devoted that time to continuing the education which Susan had begun. Every one of Tom Bowling's songs, and he had written a score of them, had Susan for the heroine; they all, too, breathed a certain love. He thought in all gallant actions the pleasure was enhanced by the approbation of women. Such were English seamen; they were ever ready to fall in love, and although a great stress had been laid upon their inconstancy, this is a point upon which most men familiar with these amphibious mortals may be excused if they differ. Across the Atlantic it is a long way for a lover to send a sigh, and Jack only, I fear, remembered his love when the ship was ordered home; then he was liberal of his purse and praise, and the money he had gained at the

peril of his life was flittered away in useless gaudy presents, to dress out the miserable object of his temporary affection. Duty, constant employment, and a vigilant first lieutenant, are awful odds against that sincere love which requires time to bring to maturity.

Of all professions in the world there is none comparable with that of a sailor. Compare him with the labourer of the soil. See how frequently a large family and small income help to drive the most industrious man to the poor-house. He is indeed a "day labourer," for he must rise with the sun, sometimes even before, and only for a few weeks in summer after it; from that moment until darkness comes on, or in summer until seven in the evening, must he drudge and delve at the most irksome, the most monotonous employment, where there is no variation of view to give him a momentary pleasure—no sudden change to enliven his miserable existence. It is a round of eternal labour, at a price barely sufficient for his support, and not nearly sufficient for his comfort. The day's work over, he is

glad enough to creep to his bed, and find in his heavy slumbers some dream of happiness never to be realized.

Would you compare the sailor with the mechanic,—there again is the same monotony—the same fixture of residence. If it be his lot to swing the ponderous hammer, which rings against the anvil,—or the saw, or the plane; or if attached to any manufactory,—there, in that one place, must he linger out his life, unless, indeed, as many have done, he breaks all connexion with his own country, and emigrates to a new land, there to go back from the little civilization he ever knew, to herd with savages, or outcasts.

The soldier, again, paraded at dawn, standing on one leg like a goose, until at a given signal he puts it down only to lift the other,—then the heavy musket, the weighty accoutrements, the toilsome march, the covering one dirt with another dirt—pipe-clay, a clean soldier is always a dirty man,—then for the forced marches, the array of battle, the long, long hours of anxiety, the charge, the wound, and

then left on the ground for some malicious enemy to wound more deeply, or to kill,—then comes the stiffened wound, the jolt in the cart to be carried in the rear, the hours necessarily lost before he can be attended to, the nights passed on the cold, damp ground, the difficulty attending the regular service of his provision, and the constant burden strung upon his shoulders, and almost bearing down his exhausted frame from its unnecessary weight.

Give me the life of a sailor; he roams the world,—the ship his home,—he carries with him his apartments ready furnished,—to him the treasures of the new world are shewn,—every climate, every soil, every people, become familiar to him,—his nights are nights of repose, and in the hour of danger he has assistance ever at hand,—if wounded in defence of his country his bed is ready to receive him, and in comparative security, the surgeon dresses his wounds. The storms, the thunder and the lightning, the raging winds or towering seas, are disregarded by him who ever associates with them; he is cradled upon the ocean, and with the

security of a child in its first bed, calmly reposes in the midst of the storm. He forms one of a small community, each bound to protect and foster the other; he sees in the flag under which he serves the honour of his cause, and his greatest pride is to maintain it uninjured. With a light heart and cheerful countenance he does his duty to his king; he has few wants beyond his grog, and his song is ever of that and the girl of his heart. His money has no miser's care, he shares it with his shipmate in open-handed liberality; and if the evening of his life seems lowering from his youthful prodigality, there rises on the distant horizon of his age the stately towers of Greenwich Hospital, his hope, his refuge, his reward.

Such is a sailor's life. It is strange that one never sees a melancholy seaman; it is unnatural, and as much in contradiction to his character as top-boots are to his dress. These men have been, and still must be, England's main-stay. And it is the duty of those who have commanded in the battle and the breeze to keep them in the remembrance of those whose riches

they have protected, and whose bulwark they remain.

It was in the month of May, many years ago, that Tom Bowling anchored in Plymouth Sound. He was rated an able seaman, from his intrepidity during a gale of wind ; and in spite of the three hundred men not one of whom had risen to be an admiral, Tom had a few Spanish towers floating in his imagination. Whenever he looked aft, and saw the officers in their Sunday uniforms, he could not help fancying that one day he should rise to their rank, and one day be respected as they were. The foremast man has seldom this idea—this gleam of hope ; but Bowling was an educated seaman, —he saw no barrier which good behaviour and steadiness could not overleap, and he kept his eye abaft as the object to be attained.

In the meantime a change had come over the life of Susan. As long as her father lived, she never was destined to service ; as a clergyman's daughter she had always been respected ; there was a kind of halo which encircled the rector's home and family ; but this airy nothing soon dis-

sipated when death deprived the mother and daughter of their protector. For a month or two they struggled on; but debts began to rise up in various quarters,—their contracted circumstances soon forced them to retire from the little society they ever knew; and their pride—clergymen's wives and daughters have as much pride as their neighbours—forbad them to solicit assistance.

At first Susan felt alarmed at proposing to take in work, or to become a governess. She preferred the first to the last; for she would then still be independent, and whenever a *friend* did call—friends are very rare visitors when the tide of misfortune sets in—she could still appear as a lady, and maintain a certain dignity; but under all inflictions, all unkindness,—for now and then an expression dropt which the sensitive heard,—she rose superior to sudden outbreaks of temper, and in the calm solitude of her own chamber received the support of religion.

How different was the fervent appeal to Providence for assistance in Susan to the self-sufficient rant of those visionary enthusiasts who

know themselvesc *alled*, and who unhesitatingly denounce their neighbours; who boldly tell us with unblushing faces, that they feel themselves safe, and are sure of a happy eternity when the weariness of life's pilgrimage is over; who bravely declare that every action of their lives was predestined; and that they being predestined, and being aware of it, must be saved. Their prayers are the desire of the arrogant, rather than the supplication of the lowly-minded and the penitent.

At last poverty began to stare both the mother and daughter in the face; there were very few articles left for sale, the produce of which might yield a scanty sustenance for a month; then indeed the case would be desperate, and a public appeal requisite. Susan's resolution was soon taken. It was useless waiting until the storm burst, when by activity she might avoid it, or so far have sought shelter as to be secure against its ravages. She applied to one who still deserved the name of friend: interest was made in a quarter where few ever applied and were unceremoniously dismissed. Susan was eagerly

engaged; her meek modest manner being her best recommendation. Her mother was removed to a neat cottage not far from Portsmouth; and before the last article had been sold, Susan was duly installed as governess in the family of Mrs. Talbot.

CHAPTER III.

IN WHICH TOM PEPPER, WHO WAS TURNED OUT OF THE SAME PLACE THAT ORPHEUS WENT TO FOR HIS WIFE, IS OUTDONE.

THERE are very few situations in life more painful than that of a governess. In some families, where their merits are properly estimated, they are companions as well as instructors; with the haughty, the proud, the poor grown suddenly rich, they are little better than upper servants. Admitted into the drawing-room of an evening, studiously avoided, as "only the governess," and slighted by the frivolous, who, wrapped in ignorance, bring wealth to cover the poverty of

their minds. Poor Susan had heard from her father how often the poor are despised, or insulted by wordy pity. She approached her future residence with fear and trembling; and imagined she saw, even in the servant who handed her trunk from the coach, his duty done as a favour. But all her misgivings were speedily dissipated; she was met by her future pupil with a smile of early friendship, and the mother received her as a companion.

There was in the expression of Rosa Talbot's face some indication of sickness, which might have escaped the unpractical eye of Susan. She was about fifteen years of age, her eyes bright, her complexion very clear, but pale; there was occasionally a slight flush suffused the face, of the most brilliant colour, whilst the figure was very slim and delicate. She was not either handsome or pretty; but there was a meekness, a mildness so truly feminine, that no one could have observed without being interested. She was a sad contrast, in some respects, to her governess, who was plump and redolent of health; her dark hair and dark eyes were

beautiful, and every feature seemed stamped in nature's loveliest mould. She was much too handsome for her situation. She would have attracted more notice than her pupil, who in her turn would have excited the most interest.

Susan found her pupil awfully deficient. The fact was, that, with the best talent, her health had been the barrier to accomplishments. She was so weak and fragile, that any exertion overcame her; and she was obliged to be humoured more than commanded. The governess had been selected, whilst cultivating the closest intimacy, to make her conversation the vehicle of knowledge, and to instil into Rosa's mind, without the fatigue of application, the rudiments of science and of religion; a better selection could not have been made. Susan was weak, mild, and affable; and having long practised upon the thick skulls and shallow brains of her charity-school, found this mode of enlightening her companion much more easy and agreeable than the everlasting drudgery of a school-room.

A few months only had elapsed before Susan was so much the friend of Rosa, that each un-

burthened her mind to the other without reserve. Susan's early history was soon told; nor was Bowling's name omitted in the recital. In this the attentive pupil, whose ears greedily received the moral so well conveyed, was taught that, in all circumstances of life, those who bear u cheerfully against misfortunes, and who acknowledge these misfortunes as the dispensations of a just Providence, shew that the seeds of religion have not fallen on a barren soil; that while the wicked repine at any trivial mischance, grow morose and disheartened in any affliction, the truly great, and the well-grounded in religion, bow submissively to the storm they cannot control, and bear a cheerful and contented heart in the midst of tribulation and adversities.

It was evident to Susan that her companion would never outlive the age of nineteen. She had already outgrown her strength; and the medical attendant had thought it his duty to warn the parent of his greatest apprehension. In vain were those beautiful ringlets brought further forward to cover the thinness of that

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pallid cheek ; within that attenuated form the havoc still continued, consumption was sapping life; and yet unfelt by its victim, it neither gave the warnings which accompany less certain death, nor produced the inconveniences of every ordinary indisposition. On the contrary, Rosa often talked of future prospects in life, of the certainty that one day she should be united in marriage with the only man she ever respected, ever loved: she was now eighteen, and Susan well knew the secret of her heart.

Near the residence of Rosa's mother, which was in Devonshire, resided a rich cousin ; here she had been sent by the careful physician, who was far too liberal to keep his patient in London for the sake of his fees, when he saw that by removing her to a milder climate she might perhaps survive some few months, or years. Cousins are at all times dangerous gentlemen ; they come at once half-way up the ladder of love; they are privileged to call the lady by her christian name ; they extend the hand as a right; and not unfrequently a caress may be given without any very particular breach of good

manners being committed. The cousin may walk alone with his cousin, and may find hundreds of opportunities of whispering what it would not be prudent to mention aloud. On the other hand, the suitor not having the advantage of relationship, must make good his approach; he must read a partial approval before he ventures upon the slightest intimacy; and can scarcely hope for one minute's conversation without some other person overhearing it.

Love, they say, is blind, it may be so; we know that love is not always mutual.

Captain Cornish, of a marching regiment, was one of those young gentlemen by no means unfrequently seen in country places. He was of good family, of good expectations, a good shot, and by no means a bad hand at fishing. He was tall, well-made, handsome; but was not troubled with more sense or principle than he could conveniently carry. He had spent some seasons in London; but in spite of his having mixed in all kinds of societies, he was bashful and reserved before women. He possessed one accomplishment in a greater degree

than his companions—he could draw the long-bow with persevering steadiness; and he was blessed with a respectable memory, which enabled him to remember his assertions, and had just readiness enough to support them by other falsehoods.

"Ah, Rosa, my dear!" said the welcome cousin, "how fares it with you to-day; and yet I need not ask the question, for I never saw you more redolent of health. What a beautiful tinge you have on those lovely cheeks; and how animated are those brilliant eyes! Can you walk to-day."

"I fear not, Augustus; I cannot move without feeling a shortness of breath; and even your entrance, which I had long expected, has made my heart palpitate more than running a race could have done."

"Poor Rosa, I'm sorry I disappointed you; I was obliged to attend my father, who required me to read the news to him, for his sight gets gradually worse. And I confess, although you were my heart's object, that I felt an inexpressible pleasure in doing my duty."

Captain Augustus Cæsar Cornish had been busily employed from breakfast until a few minutes before he visited his cousin, in playing billiards with a younger brother, who was just as idle and just as frivolous as himself.

"I forgive you, Augustus," said Rosa; "for your duty is, I know, a pleasure to you. How gratified my uncle must be in noticing the cheerfulness in which you devote your time to his wishes. Sit down, and tell me the news. We invalids are ever clamorous for that, although I hope next season to hear it in London from those who do not require to be asked for it."

"Charming Rosa! always playful, always agreeable. The news;—ah, let me see! My memory is so treacherous. The news!—there is nothing particular to-day, excepting the mention of a turnip so large that two boys eat their way into it, and remained concealed from the search of the schoolmaster for three days, subsisting entirely therein and thereupon."

"Oh, then," replied Rosa, "Miss Monckton must have been dreaming, for she mentions that

half London is in agitation on account of the news from America. And scarcely any event has given rise to such popular emotion as the battle which is made public—the battle of Bunker's Hill."

"Really!" replied Cornish, "why I thought it given on so slender a foundation that I discredited it entirely, and am perfectly sure that it will be contradicted to-morrow."

"That can hardly be, Augustus, for Miss Monckton read it from the Gazette, and remarked the names of some of the officers officially returned as killed and wounded."

"Oh, the Gazette! I must have overlooked that in reading the accounts of partnerships dissolved and bankrupts, both of which are very interesting to my father and myself. Where is Miss Monckton?"

"She is taking her morning's walk. What a delightful companion she is."

"A kind of semi-demi-instructress — an ambulating distributor of science; one, my dear Rosa, I would not call a governess, and who is too plain to be your companion and friend."

"Now, Augustus, I verily believe you have lost your sight. You could not see plainness in Susan, whose loveliness is evident to every beholder, without being so blind as to need spectacles. I hardly ever saw her equal; and if she were dressed as becomes her rank in life,—for she is the daughter of a clergyman,—she would be more admired than any Devonshire lady at the county ball."

"Not if my cousin Rosa was present."

"Pooh! pooh! Augustus. This wretched bag of bones, these sunken, hollow cheeks, these attenuated arms, could but ill contrast with the plump figure, the healthy hue, the well-rounded shoulders of Susan."

"I like delicate women. I cannot endure your vulgarly healthy people, who walk six miles before breakfast, and come home covered with dust, and laden with a handful of hedge-flowers. They are too masculine. Give me the soft mildness, the elegant lassitude of my Rosa. Her bright eyes and beautifully tinged cheeks have more charms for me than the

hoyden impetuosity, the milk-maid rosyness of unfashionable health."

Here Captain Augustus looked most unutterable sweetness, and pressed her hand. Mr. Cochrane says,

> "The shake of the hand speaks a language much clearer,
> Than any which words would essay to express."

And Rosa Talbot, as she gently returned the squeeze, said she hoped before next spring to be at any rate in a little better health, and to have left some of her unfashionable appetite in Devonshire.

"Whatever opinion you may have formed of Susan," she continued, "do, my dear Augustus, remember she is my friend and companion; and that I should esteem her the more for her praise of your civility to her. She is gone to the churchyard, to attend the burial of poor Hodge's boy, and I sent by her a trifling sum, to which she added more than she could well afford to the afflicted parents. Is it not odd, Augustus, that the wealthy require words

of consolation for themselves, but think money will heal the afflicted mind in the poor?"

"For the matter of that, Rosa, upon my soul I have the greatest esteem for those who heighten consolation by cash. I would be as melancholy and as gloomy as those spirits described by Vathek, and carry my hand over my heart for a month if my father would remember it in the weekly bills, and console me by a few words written in his banker's check. Good bye, darling; I shall come again to-morrow."

"Do not disappoint me, Augustus; before Susan came you were here constantly, and now you think I have a companion, you make me own my greater affection for you, by requesting your return."

"My dear little creature," said Augustus, as he took his cousin's privilege, and kissed the wan cheek of the girl he was deceiving, "do not doubt me; you are ever nearest my heart. I have no wish but to be for ever in your presence."

Poor Rosa burst into a flood of tears. It was an indirect offer, at least the herald of a future

declaration, and hers were tears of joy. The captain saw them, and he left her to the full enjoyment of the pleasure to be derived from them.

No sooner was Captain Augustus Cæsar Cornish clear of the premises, than he stretched his long legs and made good strides towards the church; and as he turned up the lane which led to its porch, he saw coming towards him the beautiful figure of Susan Monckton. A flush suffused his countenance, which the presence of Rosa never occasioned. He felt his heart beat quicker, and involuntarily he quickened his pace. There was a light breeze which gently agitated the thin drapery, and Susan's figure was seen in spite of her dress, and such a figure as poets have described as the perfection of the female form. Captain Cornish had long admired her beauty, and he was fearful that his cousin might perceive it. Women's eyes are very quick when the object of their admiration is near, and thus he contrived his visits so as to be alone with his cousin, and likewise most accidentally alone with Susan.

"I come, Miss Monckton," he began, "to aid you in your charity. My cousin, poor dear sick girl, told me of your benevolence, and, with your permission, I hasten to contribute the means which may enable you to be more liberal to the afflicted parents. Charity would be more appreciated were such good angels more numerous." Captain Cornish was up to a compliment or two: he had studied the art of love from every author of any repute, and he had also imbibed the vulgar but correct notion of "put it on thick, and a little will stick," so that in plaster and in compliments the proverb is verified.

Miss Monckton was in no way displeased. There was a slight confusion, the very timidity of love in the gallant captain, and she received the purse with an assurance that it should be bestowed in forwarding his wishes.

"My cousin, I fear, is very ill," he continued; "each day appears to me to render her weaker and weaker."

"She does, certainly," answered Susan, "appear to grow worse, and yet every now and

then there is a flush of such health, such a brilliancy of the eye when she speaks of her next season in London, that I almost imagine her prepared for the dance. I think I never knew any one more resigned in her sickness. She now finds sufficient amusement in books, and has never a melancholy, because she has never an idle moment."

"Who could be melancholy in your presence, Miss Monckton? People dream not of gloom in the splendour of a bright sunshine, and with one of your animated spirits, your lively conversation, your readiness at reply, my cousin must ever be cheered and amused."

"It is a pity," said Miss Monckton, endeavouring to change the conversation a little, "that Miss Talbot is unable to bring music to aid her in her amusements; she was, I understand, so weak in her youth that it was requisite to discontinue the best recreation afforded to our sex."

"I am glad it was so, for her sake," said Augustus Cæsar; "for your brilliant execution would only have made her jealous: and

any very great excitement might make her worse."

"She has excitement enough, Captain Cornish," said Miss Susan with an arch smile. "I hope you have been to see her to-day, for she almost counts the hours of your absence."

"I could wish others were equally solicitous of my visits, Miss Monckton. I leave you in safety beyond the lodge-gate. Good morning." And with a very elegant bow, he blushed deeply, and volunteered the English salute, the extension of the hand.

CHAPTER IV.

IN WHICH IT IS SHEWN THAT GREAT CAPTAINS HAVE OBSERVANT EYES, AND THAT POVERTY IS NO BAR TO ADVANCEMENT.

Bowling's industry soon procured him favour and affection. He went in the frigate in which he had first become a volunteer to the West Indies, and was draughted with some other men into the Hinchinbroke, which ship was under the command of Captain Cuthbert Collingwood — he had just succeeded Captain Horatio Nelson. She was on an expedition to the Spanish main, whence it was proposed to pass into the South Seas by a navigation of

boats along the river San Juan, and the lakes of Nicaragua and Leon.

The plan was formed without a sufficient knowledge of the country, which presented difficulties not to be surmounted even by the intrepidity of the commander, or the perseverance of the British seaman. It was dangerous to proceed on the river from the rapidity of the current and the numerous falls over rocks which intercepted the navigation. The climate was too deadly, no constitution could resist its effects,—sickness, disease, and death, marched uninterrupted over the soil, and the infection of pestilence prevailed over every precaution.

There were two hundred men belonging to the Hinchinbroke; of these, one hundred and eighty were buried by the miserable remnants of that ship. Nor was the mortality confined to that crew; each ship suffered in proportion, and thus terminated an ill-advised expedition. In the words of Captain Collingwood,—"My constitution resisted many attacks, and I survived most of my ship's company, having buried in four months one hundred and eighty of the two

hundred who composed it. Mine was not a singular case, for every ship which was long there suffered in the same degree. The transports' men *all* died, and some of the ships, having none to take care of them, sunk in the harbour; but transport ships were not wanted, for the troops whom they had brought were no more—they had fallen, not by the hand of the enemy, but from the contagion of the climate."

In this dreadful service Bowling was engaged; no fatigue overcame, no sickness attacked him; he seemed singled out of the whole number to carry back to his native country his constitution unsapped and his strength undiminished. There was no danger in which he did not share, no exertion in which he was not a participator; the scorching heat of the noon-day sun, which levelled many a brave and good man, seemed not to molest him; and the cold damps of the nights, which brought on a host of fevers, seemed to give him fresh vigour.

As each bright morn rose to see the wreck of human ruin around, Bowling might have been observed, and was observed by his vigilant com-

mander, hiding, for it could scarcely be called "burying," some unfortunate fellow, a victim to the pestilence. On one occasion a canoe was upset, in which were four men. The alligators swarmed in the river, and death had spread many a net to catch his prey. Three of the men were fortunate enough to reach the shore, but the fourth was a weak swimmer, and was caught in a slight whirlpool, through the circles of which he had not strength to force himself, and was nearly exhausted and despairing of succour, sweeping down with the current without nearing the shore.

At the moment when his anxious shipmates had watched each struggle grow fainter, Bowling arrived on the bank. He had been employed in bringing up a lead-line to sound a part of the river which was deeper and freer from shoals than the general navigation. In an instant he comprehended the difficulty. He made the line fast to a small piece of wood, and giving the other end to his shipmates, he plunged into the water, succeeded in giving the wood into the hands of the sinking man, who grappled him

and it in his fearful clutch. Both were dragged to the shore, and rescued from the voracious jaws of the river-monster, who followed his prey, of which he was balked, to the very edge of the bank.

In this wretched climate, where joy was a stranger, the three cheers which welcomed the brave fellow back to his companions, rang strangely through the wood. The very birds that had perched on the trees awaiting the repast, which was too frequently afforded, on the unburied dead, rose upon the wing; and then, undismayed even by the shout which was re-echoing through the forest, lazily returned to their perch, keeping ever near the men destined to afford another repast.

This conduct of Tom Bowling's met a proper reward. Nelson himself advised Collingwood to put him on the quarter-deck, and raise him to a volunteer, preparatory to his becoming a midshipman.

"We are too short of hands now, my dear Nelson," remarked Bowling's captain; "we cannot spare a man to make an officer."

"It will have more effect upon the others now, Collingwood. A reward on the very scene of the action induces others to be foremost in danger."

"You are right, Nelson; you are always right. Besides which, Bowling will lend a hand in any difficulty. Send Bowling here."

Bowling was at that moment taking the precaution of drying himself and his clothes, for damp clothing in the sultry climates is, if possible, more dangerous than in colder regions He came before the senior officer, Captain Nelson; the men nearest having been summoned to attend also, Nelson spoke to him—

"Your conduct, Bowling, has not been unobserved by me from the first moment we landed, and I am glad to learn from your captain that the character you brought from your last ship was as well merited there as any praise I could bestow upon you now. My men, let his conduct and his reward be an example and a spur to you *all;* we are in a perilous undertaking, and promotion should follow extraordinary exertion. You are, Bowling, no

longer a foremast man,—you are too young to be made a quarter-master, but you are not too old to be made a midshipman. Captain Collingwood will from this moment cause you to be rated as a volunteer of the first class, and, on your return to the ship, you will be promoted to a midshipman. Neither, *Mr.* Bowling (the Mister sounded strangely in his ears) shall I lose sight of you. You are fortunately with one well able to discriminate true merit; and remember that his recommendation will be a passport to my protection." Then turning to the other Captain, he added, "I don't know, Collingwood, how we shall fit him out with an uniform, as we are not troubled with any excepting what those scavenger birds were kind enough to leave us!"

"It will not be long, I fear," replied Collingwood, "before he will be able to fit himself; as dead men's clothes are sold at the mast, there can be no harm in his appropriating those of poor Hervey, who died this morning, and they can be charged to his account. Mr. Bowling," he continued, "I act in this case not only under

the directions of Captain Nelson, but in accordance with my own feelings. I should ill discharge my duty if I did not promote those who by their example and conduct merit advancement. You have, I hear, been well educated, and are therefore better able to appreciate advice. Do not allow this unexpected difference in your situation to relax either your industry or your exertion; the industrious ever thrive, the idle ever want. My eye will be upon you now more than ever it has been; because I must satisfy myself and the Lords of the Admiralty, that I have not taken an unworthy person from before the mast to place him amongst gentlemen and officers. Beware of your conversation; you must change with your situation. I shall expect the most rigid attention in your conduct, and now place you as an officer and as a gentleman in whom I repose an equal confidence with those who are of your rank."

Every man present gave Bowling three cheers; and Mr. Bowling walked away, the tears starting from his eyes, accompanied by some youngsters, all anxious to welcome him.

Not one of the men seemed jealous of his advancement, although all envied his position. The golden prospects of those who decoyed him, under no idea of his realizing such advantages now, might one day be his lot; but the only expression which escaped him was the same which the great Lord Exmouth afterwards was heard to utter,—"I have got my foot in the stirrup; it is my fault if I fail to mount." His health was drunk by his messmates, and that evening Mr. Bowling commanded a party, dressed, as Collingwood had too surely predicted, in the uniform of the unfortunate Hervey.

Now it was that Bowling, eighteen years of age, courted the most rigid observance of his conduct. He was never known to touch spirits. Some habits caught from his former associates were discontinued with his discontinuance of a a seaman's dress, and the instruction of his youth gave him the air, the manner, and the conversation of a gentleman. There was no service, however desperate, he did not court; he was everywhere. Nelson's quick eye perceived that in Tom Bowling an officer was growing

whose reputation would be allowed by all in the service, and not unfrequently he spoke to Collingwood concerning him, and again and again promised him his protection. He more than once advised Bowling to be more cautious of his health, and was himself attacked by the fever; which nearly proved fatal to him at the very moment he was urging another to be less forward in adventure. Nelson forgot that it was his example Bowling was emulating; whilst the more prudent and cautious Collingwood advanced steadily, without the restlessness of his commanding officer, and escaped from that grave of British seamen, to return to Jamaica.

The expedition failed. "Nelson," in the words of Collingwood, "received the infection of the climate before he quitted the port, and had a fever from which he could not recover, until he quitted his ship and went to England;" and Collingwood in the Hinchinbroke, with Bowling a rated midshipman, and scarcely hands enough to navigate his ship, sailed for Port Royal, in August, 1780. In December

following he was appointed to the Pelican, a small frigate of twenty-four guns ; and the foremast man, now an officer, had won so much upon the esteem of his commanding officer, that he was permitted to follow him into that ship.

The removal shook off a heavy load from the mind of Bowling; for although much attached to his shipmates, he felt the greatest delicacy and difficulty in performing his duty rigidly, without offending those from whose situation he had escaped. Now he was with those who had never commanded him ; and although it was known he had risen thus unexpectedly, yet his manners were such that they universally believed he was born a gentleman, and had run away from his parents in his enthusiasm for the naval service. His frequent conversations concerning the late Mr. Monckton gave his messmates an idea that he was under false colours as to his name, and that before long he would be recognised as that clergyman's son. Bowling had some prize-money to receive, and although at that moment, in order to keep up appearances, he required every dollar, yet was he seen busily

employed for more than one hour counting his money, buying English notes from those who had them, and afterwards getting into the snuggest corner of the berth, he rubbed his hands with a degree of satisfaction, and began to write a letter, which was seen to be directed to Miss Monckton.

If there is any real happiness in this miserable life, it is in its retrospect, when good actions arise upon the memory, and bring with them the same pleasurable feelings which were experienced when they were performed. Bowling was treasuring up happiness for the hereafter; he had all the generosity, the known generosity of the British seaman; he was kind in his manner, grateful in his behaviour, submissive to his superior, and affable to those beneath him. He pictured to his mind the manner of his captain, and on all occasions where he was the commanding officer, endeavoured to imitate his mildness and his firmness.

In July in the following year, the yellow fever broke out in Jamaica, saving which malady, said an old West India merchant, the climate

would be the best in the world. It was one of those pleasant seasons which render Jamaica cheap, from the superfluity of comestibles and the paucity of inhabitants. Many officers died, and Mr. Bowling was a purchaser of those uniforms which fitted his form, and which had been bought by some very affectionate parents for some future Benbow or Keppel. Yellow Jack destroyed many a bright prospect. Many a youngster who had risen with hope and heart both strong and free, before sunset was bled, blistered, and his head shaved, with the burning fever unabated. Here, attended by black people, with few comforts and no luxuries, in a ward where others were screaming in madness, or actually dying of the disease under which they were labouring, he could only leave the hospital to be conveyed to the palisades.

It became necessary to remove the ships from such destruction; and the Pelican amongst the rest put to sea. Bowling had escaped with a "seasoning," as it is termed. His hair was a little the shorter, his face a little the paler; but he was now voted secure, and had returned to

his duty as active and as zealous as ever. The Pelican cruised from that time to the beginning of August off St. Domingo, and was on her return to Port Royal in the month of August. There had been a few prizes taken, all of which had been sent into harbour. The men had recovered from their attack, and the highest spirits prevailed; still there was some apprehension that the fever would visit them again, and the friendship cemented in the hour of danger be broken by a day of sickness. The crew were weakened from the number of men in the prizes, and the officers reduced to watch and watch.

"I think," said Bowling to the officer of his watch, "that this must be the land on the lee-bow."

The officer came, and giving a hasty glance, rebuked the look-out men forward for neglect of duty.

"It's only the land *breeze* coming off, Sir," said the seaman; "it has just appeared, or I should have reported it before."

The officer seemed satisfied with the answer, and said to Bowling, "Your eyes are a little too quick to-night."

"I hope, Sir," he replied, "it may prove that my eyes are in error; but it looks so much like the land to me even now, that I am inclined to differ a little with the look-out man."

"It is the land breeze, and we shall soon run right into it."

Bowling suggested with great modesty that it was usually calm before that cool restoration came; but the lieutenant, a young man just promoted, and who was perhaps thinking more of harbour than of dangers, turned away and continued his quarter-deck walk.

CHAPTER V.

IN WHICH IS SHEWN HOW THE TORCH OF HOPE BLAZES TO THE LAST, AND MAKES AROUND IT AN ATMOSPHERE OF LIGHT AND LIFE.

Captain Augustus Cæsar Cornish, who could not bear Miss Susan Monckton, had contrived to make himself especially civil and agreeable to her. He lied so much like truth that she was deceived ; he never ventured upon the slightest freedom or rudeness, but conducted himself with such respect that she never doubted his intentions towards his cousin, and frequently ventured on the conversation she believed most consonant with his wishes.

"It is, Captain Cornish, a dreadful blow suspended for a short season over your head; but I have no doubt, however poignantly you may feel its force, time and religion will afford you some relief. The medical men have announced that there are no hopes for your cousin, without she could be removed to Lisbon or to Madeira. They believe the angel of death to be hovering over her couch, and have limited the short space of her life to two months."

"I cannot believe you sincere, Miss Monckton, in this declaration," replied Cornish, with wonderful melancholy of mien. "If she died, I should mourn over her grave; but I have brighter views; I do not credit the dark forebodings of those men. The apothecary, a man who has attended our family for years, declares the expectoration of blood as perfectly trivial; the voracious appetite as a proof of returning health; he calls appetite, health's barometer, and the flushing of the cheek the beautiful emblem of youth and modesty. I have a firm reliance in this man, and my hope gives me additional confidence."

"She is anxious to see you. She herself was desirous I should prepare you for an interview which, under the circumstances even of the difference of opinion between the medical men from the doubt of any certainty of recovery, must be painful. I beg of you to command your feelings, for you will require all your courage to receive from her mouth this mournful preface to a last farewell. Oh, Captain Cornish, if ever there was an angel on this earth, your cousin is that angel. It is now three years since I have been her companion; as her friend, she has told me of your mutual attachment; and in all her sickness and tribulation, your name has ever been on her lips. Never have I heard from her one word of reproach or hasty expression; but with patience and resignation she awaits that moment which no physician can prolong. Let me request you to discredit this country apothecary, and believe that no regular practitioner would have imparted such unwelcome tidings to the mother, or feelingly hinted it to the patient, but under the strongest conviction of the truth."

Captain Cornish by no means relished this meeting, but he was a doomed man, and he went with as much coolness as he could command. He had never positively made his cousin an offer, but he perceived that she expected it. Although almost within the grasp of death, she pictured to herself a long life of pleasure, the invariable consequence of the fatal disease under which she laboured.

Cornish entered the apartment, and found his cousin, as usual, reclining on a couch near the window. It was a beautiful summer's day; all nature was smiling; the garden exhibited a profusion of flowers, the perfumes of which reached the couch of the invalid. There was the hectic flush, so delicately red, resting on her cheek; but she was dreadfully emaciated, and her long thin fingers felt hard and unfeminine as Cornish took her hand. The eye, bright and vivid, rested upon the fine features before her; and she first spoke, in a voice deeper than usual, but in her general strain of liveliness. "Well, Augustus; never punctual,—always a little too late: you would lose your promotion at the

Horse Guards by being a quarter of an hour after the appointed time. Ah, you truant! I have heard of your pretty speeches to Miss Monckton, and your having waylaid her from the church. I shall be jealous, my fine cousin, if I hear of any more accidental meetings."

"The greatest accident in life, I assure you. I was so occupied in thinking of you and our last conversation, that I took a contrary direction to that I had intended, and, to my great surprise, stumbled upon that girl."

"Why, you went on purpose to aid her in her work of charity, and like the good Christian you are, enabled her to do much for those poor people."

"The sudden thought of a second. It occurred to me she might imagine I had purposely come that road, and therefore I determined to account for the intrusion. Indeed, I was glad to have the opportunity of assisting Hodge; for although I have every disposition to relieve the wants of others, I have but little time to act up to my inclination,—but enough of myself. I think you are looking better this morning."

"I always look better when you are near; who else do I see but those wretched doctors, whose long faces quite scare me. It was but yesterday one of these melancholy personages began in a low tone of voice to speak of the uncertainty of life, and the necessity of a constant preparation for death; and he looked at me as if I was likely to be summoned. I could hardly resist smiling, for in the middle of his warning I thought how delightful it would be to have my box at the Opera next year, which mamma had promised me; and how pleased I should be at our rides in the Park."

She had her hand in that of her cousin's; and the last few words, accompanied as they were by a look which no lover, however cold, could mistake, suddenly awoke his sensibility.

"Yes, dearest," he began, (a tremour came over the sick girl,) "these doctors, whenever their antidotes fail, talk of that which is most familiar to them—death. It is a subject on which I hope we need not descant for years and years; there are brighter prospects, I trust, for both of us. The next season, I hope, will see my darling

Rosa restored to her former health, and even the Opera become a secondary thought; for I would, if I dared venture, picture happiness more complete to yourself, by sharing it with me."

A sudden burst of tears rendered her inaudible; but Cornish felt the increased pressure of the hand, and knew in that pressure that he had mentioned the subject nearest her heart.

"Come, dearest Rosa, let me dry those tears which I am vain enough to imagine are not tears of sorrow. I will hail your silence as an acceptance of that you could not have mistaken. We are not like strangers; we have known each other from our youth upwards, and I have felt that my greatest happiness was ever near you. There, now that you smile again, I will take from those rosy lips the consent that poor, weak woman's tongue is afraid to confess."

He kissed her, he had kissed her often before; but never with the warmth of affection with which he now embraced her. An age of sickness and sorrow was obliterated in that moment; a glow of health and animation came over her

countenance which would have deceived even the anxious eye of a mother; and at that moment Rosa never looked more beautiful. Long and anxiously she gazed at him without speaking; the heart was too full. All she had ever regarded as Paradise in this world was realized; her love was returned. She could now pour out her soul to the only man she ever regarded with the eye of affection, who was setting by her side, her hands clasped in his.

"I have read," she began, "'that a girl unasked may own a well-placed flame.' And I have long before this moment spoken of you with admiration to Susan; she has ever been the confidant of my affections, and she will hear this hour's conversation with almost as much pleasure as I shall relate it. Susan, too, likes you, Augustus. You must not any longer shun her because she is only my governess or companion. She is of good family; and she will be happy to forward our mutual views. I feel so much stronger, that I could almost walk in the garden; and I long to run to my mother and confess to her my acceptance of your love."

"That, my dear Rosa, had better be deferred. It is useless trumpeting to the world our engagement. As yet you are too ill to be married. We can keep our own secret; and our constancy will best test our affection until the time when you are so far recovered as to be led to the altar."

"I will be guided by you in everything, Augustus. Your words shall be my law; nay, do not look affronted at the word. A wife should obey; and I will practise that difficult task before marriage, in order better to conform to it hereafter."

"Then let us see, my Rosa, if you can obey me in what I have heard is almost impossible in a woman."

"There is nothing impossible when a woman loves, and her lover asks. I'll do it."

"Then do not mention one word of this to Susan. I would rather it were kept a profound secret from all."

"Why, you cruel hard-hearted soldier! you would rob me of my greatest delight, that of praising you to Susan,—of listening to her ani-

mated picture of you,—of hearing your name, —and of bringing you, when absent, near to myself by being occupied in conversation about you. You have asked, or ordered, the most cruel compliance to the most cruel order. I obey you; but may I ask why you wish it?"

A smile passed over his lips. "I want to see how long a woman can keep a secret, which at present would be useless to divulge. Besides, my fair cousin, there is a little of man's vanity at the bottom of all this; and I will make a clear confession to you. There is no secret if more than one person besides the parties concerned know it. If we cannot keep it ourselves, it is rather too much to expect other people to do so; and thus I infer, that if Miss Monckton knew it, she would confide it to another, and I should hear of it at the county ball, and then what girl would dance her curls out with a man engaged to be married to another? Put it down, my Rosa, call it vanity or by any name you like, only oblige me—nay, obey me, in this my most particular request."

"Well, well," said Rosa, "it is easily done,

after all. I have only to keep silent; for if I speak, your name is so near my heart it will most certainly escape."

Cornish kissed her affectionately as he took his leave; and scarcely had he left the room, when, the excitement being passed, the poor weak girl fainted away.

"I hope," said Susan, as she met the captain, who had again quite accidentally taken a wrong direction to his house, "that you acted up to your promise, and spoke to your cousin in the serious manner her situation requires."

"I never saw any one, Miss Monckton, so resigned to her fate. She spoke of the cruelty of being torn away so young from this world. She mentioned the physician's kind admonition; but she still, with a hope which seems beyond understanding, hinted at her probable recovery. There is no chance, I fear, of that; and may I trust, my dear Miss Monckton, (here the handsome captain took her hand,) that you will continue that kindness, that affection for her which you have ever manifested; that you, the very picture of good temper, will bear the hasty re-

marks, the frivolous complaints, without allowing yourself to be annoyed ?"

"All I can do, Captain Cornish, to alleviate her wants, to console her in affliction, and to encourage her by a hope of the goodness of God hereafter, you may rely upon being done. She must now, whilst living, become dead to this world in her preparation for the next."

"And fortunate beyond all imagination is that woman who, at her last illness, has a companion so religious, so excellent as yourself; who will kindly lean over the couch of sickness, forestal her very wants, soothe her anguish, and hold out the balm of relief before the complaint is uttered. To you in every confidence I leave her; she has ever been a favourite of mine, but nothing beyond a favourite. It would be highly criminal in any man to acknowledge, even if he felt it, a passion for one whose days are numbered, and whose grave I may almost say is prepared."

"And yet, Captain Cornish, I think—pardon me for the liberty of intruding my thoughts—that your cousin would die happier if you would

make some acknowledgment of a feeling she certainly experiences for you."

"It is impossible, Miss Susan," (the gallant captain here advanced another step up the ladder of courtship,) "I cannot avow what I never experienced. Would you—you who I believe the very pattern of your sex—would you recommend me to make an avowal at her last moments which is not founded on truth. I cannot tell a falsehood. From my youth to the present moment, no man ever believed me capable of such meanness; and I think I may conscientiously say, I never told an untruth in all my life."

"Even I, Captain Cornish, whom you have so highly complimented, think there are circumstances which warrant a slight deviation, not a wilful abandonment of the truth; and I think, since your cousin only seems to receive delight in your presence, that you might, even without exactly speaking, give her a prospect of realizing her fondest hope. It is indeed a nice point; but it is hard to leave this world with our hearts so fixed upon one worldly point, that we cannot

bring our minds to a due consideration of our awful state."

"Why, it would be a mockery of that holy ceremony to carry almost a corpse to the altar, and swear to love and cherish it so long as I should live."

"The oath would not bind you long; but I am bound to say, your views are most honourable. There are many men who would rejoice to marry her now, and thus secure her property. If my opinion could have been heightened of Captain Cornish, his generous behaviour in this point would have raised it—who would not seek the hand of any one for the sake of her fortune."

"Never woman spoke truer, Miss Susan. I would rather be loved for myself, and I would rather love her whose fortune never tempted me into her society. I shall call every day now; and I hope I may sometimes have the good fortune to meet Miss Susan." So saying, Captain Cornish having wound up his hypocrisy, struck across the road to his father's house.

The last sentence was not lost upon Susan; and as she pondered over his sayings, his honour-

able conduct, his kind expressions, she thought how sad it was to be hurled from her proper situation in life, where she could command respect, to the level of a governess. In the midst of her reflections she arrived at Mrs. Talbot's door, and received from the servant a letter written in a strange hand, and with a foreign post-mark.

CHAPTER VI.

IN WHICH IS SHEWN THAT THE YOUNG OF A PELICAN DO NOT ALWAYS THRIVE ON ITS BLOOD.

It was nearly the end of the hurricane season, —but hurricanes sometimes extend their visits, and then disasters accompany their line of march. Bowling's eyes were soon directed from the leeward to the weather side. There was gathering on the horizon a large black cloud, in the centre of which was a round clear space; it seemed quite a contradiction to the surrounding gloom. With a rapidity perfectly astounding the whole horizon to windward became dark,

and sounds were heard aloft like the rushing of contrary winds.

In this fast approaching enemy all thoughts of the loud wind were soon lost. The hands were turned up, and Collingwood, as he looked to windward, was the first to call out "Bear a hand, my lads, aloft; furl everything!" And turning to the first lieutenant, he desired him to strike the top-gallant yards and mast, to pass additional lashings round the quarter boats, and hasten every preparation which could make the ship snug. "That," he said, as he looked at the round clear part,—"that is the eye of the hurricane, and aloft the wind is already over us."

The Pelican was in good order, but there was a slight confusion at the unusual summons. Still a general activity prevailed. The pipe was given to "furl sails," and as there was then but little wind, everything was made safe and snug. Then came "down top-gallant yards and masts," and by following up one order by another, as the duty of the first was completed, the little Pelican was getting ready to meet the attack of the furious enemy.

In the execution of these duties Captain Collingwood was most active. But in passing along the lee gangway to the forecastle, where he was anxious to see that some orders had been executed, he was surprised to see Bowling apparently perfectly inactive, leaning his chin on his hands, and, if not asleep, in the attitude generally observed when midshipmen are, like hackney-coach horses, taking a standing doze. He called him in a voice full of anger and astonishment, and expressed his wonder that at such a moment one who had experienced such favour and promotion should be asleep.

Bowling answered equally surprised, and with more than usual haste, and less of his usual submission—

"I never sleep, Sir," he said, "when danger unexpected is at hand! I was satisfying myself that my eyes had not deceived me before I ventured to apprize you of that of which at this moment you are ignorant!"

"Pray what may that be, Sir?" said Collingwood, evidently annoyed at the answer, which at that moment he believed an evasion.

"Those are the Morant Keys to leeward," said Bowling, as he pointed to a low black line hardly perceptible in the horizon.

"Impossible!" replied his captain, alarmed at the very suggestion of a greater danger than the one now near at hand.

"I mentioned it, Sir, to the officer of the watch before that hurricane cloud appeared to windward; the darkness of that cloud has made the part of the horizon beyond its extension more discernible. I am satisfied that is the land."

The Morant Keys were exactly in the lee-beam; and most certainly hope itself could not have believed them more than five miles distant. To those who looked with the cool consideration of the danger, undismayed by the probable result, that distance would be reduced to at least three miles,—a distance so perfectly insignificant, that one hour would be sufficient to drive the vessel, against every effort to counteract it in a hurricane, on the rocks.

The orders were given to clear away the bower-anchors; to bend the sheet-cable; but nothing

as to the alteration of the vessel could be effected. The sails were all furled, and to windward were clouds sufficiently threatening to oblige the most anxious to keep them so.

It was about this time when, by the means of the night-glass no doubt remained as to the dark mark to leeward being the land, that the wind was heard aloft whistling and roaring, whilst below it was a dead calm. This extraordinary phenomenon attracted the attention of all. The dog vane made of feathers never moved; there was the most awful stillness in the lower regions of the atmosphere, whilst at a very small distance from the topmast-head all the furies of elemental war seemed striving for pre-eminence. The clouds had now extended themselves from a little on the lee-bow to right astern, and the moon, which an instant before was unclouded, was suddenly covered as with a large dark veil. Every man stood in awful suspense, and each bold seaman wound himself up to meet undismayed an enemy as impossible to conquer as to evade. The vessel lay waiting the attack; "no force could then resist, no flight

could save." The howling of the storm grew louder and louder, and once the loose ropes at the topmast-head blew out like the lightest pendant in a breeze.

It was now upon the water everywhere. To windward, to leeward it seemed breaking at once like a huge wave upon the shingles of the shore. In spite of the darkness the foam of the sea was plainly visible; and whilst remarking this to the first-lieutenant, as Collingwood whispered his apprehension for the safety of the ship, the whole fury of the hurricane burst upon the vessel. She reeled over to starboard for a second, when, being met by a counter squall, she heeled over to port. No orders could be heard; each man clung to the cleats and ropes. The spray flew like a sea over her; and the wind, which blew apparently from every quarter at once, sprinkled it lavishly on the deck. The precautions so carefully taken, saved the masts; but the wind in one of its most furious squalls shook the starboard quarter boat with such violence that a part of the gunwale was blown

adrift, and the bolt to which the slings were fastened was drawn.

It was most desirable to ascertain if, in this furious war of winds, the ship neared the Morant Keys; but the old quartermaster, who, undismayed at the danger, stood by the wheel, declared that no man could tell which way the vessel had drifted; for no sooner had the wind appeared to come from the east, than it as suddenly shifted to the west; and that already the head of the vessel had gone round the compass three or four times. It was equally impossible to see the approach to any danger, the spray was so thick, and now the night so dark that no man could discern a line-of-battle ship had she been there at the distance of one hundred yards. The wind howled and roared; the spray came like a sea; the ship swayed to and fro, sometimes running a-head at the rate of ten knots an hour, then as suddenly check into stern way, with her head in every position. And in this fearful uncertainty was she retained for at least a quarter of an hour, when the wind

seemed inclined to settle to the north-eastward, and continue a heavy gale. Again it suddenly shifted with apparently accumulated force; for the main-topmast was snapped short off, and the jib-boom was carried away. Again the wind seemed disposed to settle to the north-west, leaving the Pelican on a lee-shore; and that lee-shore, providing every chance had been in her favour, not more than four miles distant.

As the prospect of the gale becoming steady increased, the energy of the captain increased also. The courses and topsails had been furled without being reefed; and in order to shew them at all to the furious gale, it was requisite to close reef one, and reef the other. Then was, indeed, the danger; for the sail, when released from the gaskets, would be partially subject to the wind; and however well it might be retained in the clue-lines and bunt-lines, yet such was the force of the hurricane, that it might be split even in that situation, or breaking adrift from the slender ropes which confined it, might blow over the lee-yardarm, and sweep the clinging seamen from their hold.

It is in situations such as these that the courage and the seamanship of British tars have ever been shewn; and never did they better deserve the praise their captain lavished upon them than on this night. But in spite of every precaution, the furious gale caught in the mainsail. It tore the sail from its protecting rope; it was split to ribbons, and there flapping about with a violence quite inconceivable to those who never have witnessed a scene like the present, it seemed to defy every exertion either to furl or to unbend it.

With the other sails they had been more fortunate, for they contrived to close reef the three topsails and foresail, and the last sail was set. A tysail was got up abaft, the wind having so far settled and moderated as to allow the Pelican to appear under some canvass; but what could be done without the mainsail?—literally nothing. And although many had made attempts to lie out on the yard, they were as often obliged to return and seek shelter in the top. Rewards were offered,—threats,cheers, every extreme was resorted to; but no sailor could face the diffi-

culty. Whilst the captain was roaring through his speaking-trumpet, which scarcely conveyed the voice to the hearing of the men aloft, Bowling was seen descending the main-lift on the weather side. He reached the yardarm, and instantly began to cut the sail away. As it became liberated, it of course blew over to leeward; and thus the great end was accomplished. The useless canvass was entirely cut away from the yard, and a new mainsail was got up and prepared for bending. In the meantime the gale continued; and as the heavy clouds which had enshrined the hurricane were dissipated, when the winds broke loose, the moon was again visible; and with its clear light came the certainty of shipwreck.

The sea, which was high, prevented the Pelican from fore-reaching much, and the Morant Keys extended to about two points on the lee-bow. To veer would be to run closer to the shore, and on the starboard tack there was equally little hope of clearing the rocks, which extended from the further end of the Key. The main-topmast was cleared away; the stump

sent on deck, and the mainsail set. It was entirely useless. Every time the ship lifted to the sea, the land was more plainly visible. Hope only could suggest the avoiding the wreck until daylight, now within an hour of breaking. The wind in the meantime seemed to moderate as the approach of the sun grew nearer. And some who clung to hope with most tenacity, talked of the possibility of tacking; and that then, under the fore and mizzen topsails with reefed courses, a fore-topmast-staysail, and a reefed driver, they might yet weather the danger.

Captain Collingwood, with the coolness which ever distinguished that officer in the days of his early command, gave his orders with clearness and precision. The booms were not cut adrift, as the motion of the ship was too violent; but men were stationed with axes ready to effect this when it became impossible to avoid the shock now growing closer and closer. The same orders were given for the quarter-boats; loose gratings were placed where they would float clear of the ship; and no one precaution

was omitted which the wisdom and experience of former seamen had handed down to their successors. In this severe trial, the dauntless courage of the officers inspired the men with confidence; the wind roared, the sea raged, and the surf beat against the rocks, which the first streak of daylight made visible to all. The discipline of the ship remained unimpaired; and the men stood at their station for bringing the ship to an anchor, without attempting to seek a more comfortable or a less hazardous place.

When daylight broke there was yet half-an-hour of existence left. Soundings were ineffectually tried for; one hundred and eighty fathom of line reached no bottom; and it was well known by the experienced in those seas, that near the shore the water was too deep for anchorage. It was suggested to unclench one cable and to splice it to another, thus making about two hundred and forty fathoms; but the master shook his head, and declared it was useless.

To wear ship, if she failed to stay, was now

hinted at by the first-lieutenant. It was one of those desperate chances just as well to try since persevering in the same course was certain ruin. The surf beat high over the rocks which appeared shewing their treacherous heads as the towering sea passed over them; and on these rocks it was almost certain that the ship would go during the manœuvre. It was the only chance left to avoid the danger under the lee-bow, and it was resorted to. The ship was kept quite full, with her head actually towards the rock, and she soon gathered good way. A smoother place was watched for in the roll of the seas. The helm was put gently down,—the fore-topmast staysail was hauled down,—the foresail hauled up as it touched. Every scientific manœuvre was used to coax her round; but as she came up to the wind, a sea struck her on the weather-bow, it stopped the little way she had; she fell round off; and before the ship gathered way enough to make the helm useful, she struck upon the outer rock. The foremast went by the board; the mizzen-topmast came down by the run; and the grinding keel, torn

from its strong fastening, floated alongside. The booms were cut adrift. Disorder and confusion usurped the place of obedience and discipline. The Pelican had ceased to exist. Her wreck, her loss was inevitable.

When she struck, some boys shrieked at the danger, and were rushing to the lee-gangway. Bowling stopped them, and taking them away from all danger from the fall of the mainmast, said authoritatively, "Stick by the wreck. It's time enough to take to the water when we have no dry footing left." Another sea washed the ship on an inner rock, which was partially under shelter of the outer one; and fortunately she rested upon this, or she would have sunk. It stove her in about ten feet before the step of the mainmast; and as she rolled to the sea, which now made a clear breach over her, the planks gave way, and the rock appeared further and further in the ship.

Some hasty rafts were constructed; some clung desperately to the spars as they were swept clear of the ship, and trusted to the goodness of Providence and their own exertions;

others took a wild farewell, and lept headlong into the angry surf; others lashed themselves on gratings; some rushed to the quarter-boat, cut her adrift, and lept into the sea, and clung to her keel as she rolled over and over.

The sea came rolling along as fiercely and as savagely as ever, although the wind had considerably abated. The mainmast fell over the starboard side, and took with it a considerable part of the upper bulwark; and it was evident that two or three more seas would split the Pelican to pieces. Bowling still clung to the wreck. He lashed the boys, who clung trembling to the spot he had assigned them, to different spars, and he launched them overboard, cheering them with the hope that others had already reached, and that the same Providence which guided and directed their shipmates through the foaming breakers might still watch over them and bring them safe to the Sandy Key, now their only refuge.

"Hold on, youngsters," he cried, "and shut your mouths. It's no use bellowing now. Cling to your hold, and God protect you."

He had launched the last who cried and clung to him, calling on his mother and father for succour, when Captain Collingwood touched him on the shoulder.

"If you live, Bowling, England will see in you one whom she may regard with pride. If I live, I am your guardian; and should I die, I leave behind me a prayer for your welfare through life. Remember the promise of Nelson; tell him at my last moment I bequeathed you to him. Now, leave the wreck;—I will be the last man in my ship."

"It is the only command I am likely to disobey, Sir," replied Bowling, who answered with as much coolness as if no danger was near. "I must see you safe, and then I will trust to my arms and to my own good fortune."

"No, no, Bowling; I *will* be the last man. Hold on, hold on! this sea will annihilate us all."

It came howling and foaming over the outer rock, which it seemed to pass uninterupted. It dashed full upon the Pelican. The devoted vessel split asunder; and the two last on board, the captain and Bowling, were precipitated into

the sea. Bowling was a strong swimmer, and soon caught hold of one of the many planks which now almost covered the sea. He launched it towards his captain, who saw the generous effort, and availed himself of it. Whilst Bowling, trusting to his strength, struck out for another;—he clutched it, and used his utmost power to reach the shore. The heavy surf rolled him over, and almost buried him; but he rose superior to it, and every time he came to the surface he turned his anxious eye towards the man who, on the verge of death, had thought of him.

In the meantime many had reached the Key; and some not injured in the swim had unwound the light rope which had fastened the raft together, and used it as well as they were able, to throw to others as they neared the shore, and thus some almost on the point of being drowned from exhaustion had been saved. The generous fellow who used this remedy, followed the sea as it ebbed back from the shore, and thus got nearer the object, at the risk of being again sucked into the foaming water.

Bowling was some distance a-head of his captain, for he did not cling to his plank until the sea came towards him; then, as it passed, he propelled it forward, and thus got nearer and nearer the shore. He caught the rope, and was dragged into security; but it was instantly to return to danger. Although his captain was yet out of reach, he twice endeavoured to force his way through the rolling breakers, and take the rope to him. Each time he was dashed back upon the shore; and the last time stunned by the effect. He was rescued by the officer of his watch, and lay extended on the beach.

For a long time the fate of the captain was precarious; his youth, his courage, his hope bore him up, and he reached the shore in security. Not one soul was lost; a watch-bill in the pocket of one of the youngsters served as a muster-roll, and an hour after the captain touched the shore, every man of the Pelican answered his muster. The difficulty had but begun. The Morant Keys are low sandy islands in which there is very little vegetation, and less sustenance for hungry shipwrecked seamen.

Rarely is a turtle found, and in stormy weather they never come near the land. A cask of salt pork was luckily cast on shore, but not until the second day, when the gale still continued, and any attempt by any ingenuity to reach Jamaica was held impossible.

This cask of pork was husbanded with niggardly care; and portioned out at one quarter of the usual allowance. Water was procured by means of holes dug in the sand; but there was no covering from the sultry noonday sun, or from the more baneful effects of night damps, and the moon's putrifying power. It was expected by the surgeon that fever would take what the gale had spared; but singular as it may appear, it is no less true, the excitement of the situation, the constant hope of release, and perhaps the very low simple diet, warded off all attacks of the fever and kept the crew in health.

As the different spars were washed on shore, the crew were employed in converting them into large rafts. There were several boat oars secured, and thus a chance was created of effecting a landing in Jamaica, when the gale ceased, and

the usual smooth water nights succeeded. This kept the men in employment, or there might have been some discontent. Idleness is ever fruitful of mischief. For ten days did the crew of the Pelican remain on the Keys, and no chance had offered of escape. A boat washed on shore was made partially seaworthy, Bowling was sent to Jamaica to apprize the senior officer of the desperate state of the crew, and reached his destination in safety.

The last piece of pork had been distributed. Famine stared them in the face, when the Diamond frigate hove in sight, and, attracted by the signals made from the Keys, she stood close in. The crew of the ill-fated Pelican,not a vestige of which remained, were received on board, and all were safely landed at Port Royal.

CHAPTER VII.

IN WHICH IS A SAILOR'S LOVE-LETTER, AND A SPICE OF FEMININE MANŒUVRES.

Susan, on receiving the letter, went to her own apartment, and closing the door, examined with care the seal, the direction, and the post mark. It frequently happens, that even the most curious lose five or six minutes in guessing by the seal from whom the letter came, when by opening it all doubts would be removed. "I neither know the seal nor the hand-writing," she said to herself as she turned it from one side to the other; and then, as if some evil was fore-

boded, with trembling hand she opened it. Great was her surprise to find four five-pound notes fall from the folds; and at once, without looking at the beginning, she turned to the conclusion, and saw the name of Thomas Bowling. Thus it ran:—

"Jamaica, June, 1781.

"Miss Monckton,—There never yet was a long lane that had neither end nor turning; and so it is with bad fortune or ill luck, it's sure to take another course in time, and get us into a snug anchorage. The tide at first set strongly against me. I thought I should have grounded with the ebb, and never got afloat again; but all of a sudden in came the flood, and swept me clear of the shoals into fair weather and pleasant prospects. I left you nearly aground too. I hope you have held on, although the cable was two parts stranded; and that the enclosed will put some new rigging over your mast head, and make you as trim and as neat below and aloft as you always were when you patted me on the head, and said, 'Well done, Bowling.' I never shall forget your sweet face;

and when I prove ungrateful for all your kindness, may I be blown away in a hurricane. No, no; whichever course I steer, Susan is before me—my hope, my haven; every wind which blows bears your name upon its wings. And there is no lighthouse in the stormy night half so welcome as the beam of those dark eyes.

"I left you to be a cabin-boy in a collier. I am now a midshipman in the Pelican. Before me is every bright prospect; and I have left behind me the shoals and the shallows of life. Take the trifle I have enclosed; and when we come athwart any more of the French vessels, you shall halve my prize money, as I value your life equally with my own. Oh, for the day when I shall see you again, and learn from you how you have weathered the squalls which threaten to dismast you. Until then give poor Tom a corner in your heart. The tide may set against me, the winds may be unfavourable, my friends may prove false, poverty may overtake me; but nothing can rob my heart of your image, as no other portrait can efface the remembrance thereon engraven. May He whom you taught

me to know, hear my prayers for your guidance and safety. I lower my flag as I salute yours; and as I write this respectfully, I hope I may not be thought impertinent. I remain, Miss Monckton,

"One grateful for your kindness,—one who prays for your safety,

"THOMAS BOWLING.

"P.S. If ever you see the German doctor, say Tom lives, and will one day shake him by the hand. And if you could find out what was my father's name, and who I am, just tip me a stave; for somehow I think I was a gentleman's son, kidnapped by the dog-stealer."

This production was read by Susan again and again. The tears came in her eyes when she thought that out of all her pretended friends, in the hours of her affluence, not one had proffered her assistance; and that the fatherless boy, taken from the grave of a convicted scoundrel, and taught by her the first rudiments of knowledge; buffeted about in life, without a friend to assist, with no prospect

of reward, save that arising from good behaviour, had thought of her when separated thousands of miles, and had sent, as a free gift, perhaps the whole of his little stock, earned at the risk of death before the cannon's mouth.

In that moment Susan experienced perfect happiness. Her pupil had risen to be an officer by his own good conduct; and that good conduct was the result of her exertions. Nor could she forget, that when that youngster embarked in the low drudgery of a cabin-boy, he had left for her every farthing he had in the world, and began life a penniless child of fortune.

Then again the letter contained more than gratitude; it bore in the rough language of the sailor the finest sentiments of the heart. It merely required the common exertion of the mind to render his rude phrases into the warmest effusion of love; and Susan, overcome by this unexpected gratitude, found her heart beat with an emotion she had never before experienced.

She had lingered longer than usual, and Rosa now expected her; for Susan was the companion most welcome when Cornish was absent.

The lively air with which Susan entered excited the attention of her companion; whilst, on the other hand, the attenuated form, the fast-falling cheeks of the invalid, struck Susan with a momentary horror.

"Welcome, Susan, welcome. You are late; but your cheerful looks betoken some good news. A letter! why, with the exception of those written by your mother, I never knew you receive any correspondence. A man's hand, too,—what marvel is this?"

"Yes, indeed, a letter from a friend—from a lover—from Tom Bowling—the poor boy of whom I have already spoken; say not now that the world is composed of the false-hearted, the selfish, the interested. There is nothing in its contents of which I am ashamed. Read it; it has made me the happiest of women; for it is the hand of a grateful—an honourable man."

Rosa laughed at the unusual style, and said she required an interpreter.

"You would not require one, Rosa, if the letter had been addressed to you; only put these words into others more familiar to our

ears, and what could the warmest lover add to it?"

"Lord, my dear Susan, how can stranded cables, ebbs and flood-tides, rigging and mast-heads, be turned into a lover's epistle?"

"What do you think of that part which speaks of the portrait? and what say you to the poor fellow who robs himself of his all, to send me what he can ill afford to spare?"

"Bless me, Susan, if you are not in love with that rough sailor who is going to be blown away in a hurricane—"

"If a grateful heart is a proof of affection, and affection is the touchstone of love, I am in love, nor do I blush to confess it. How can I be otherwise with one who wafts my name on every breeze?"—and she added, laughingly, "he really is very good looking."

"Wait, child, until next season, and I will find you a lover as handsome as my Captain Cornish."

"Ah," she continued, "Captain Cornish is indeed handsome; but we are not all Rosa Talbots, with her fortune and her eyes to cap-

tivate such heroes. I hope your last interview with him relieved your mind of all its anxieties, for this love conversation of mine is neither fit nor wholesome for either of us now."

"Susan, my dear, I feel so uncommonly well this morning that I cannot allow you to enact the ruler. I have a secret to tell you, Susan; but are you quite sure that you would not whisper it even in the ears of your Tom Bowling. Heavens! what a name!—one might as well marry Ben Backstay, who, you know, according to the song, 'was a sailor and a very merry boy.'"

"Oh, dearest Rosa, do not, I beseech you, waste your time in the remembrance of such sayings. Why talk of this world's love when our thoughts should be directed to a more pure, a more heavenly love, in the situation in which it has pleased God to place you, with the knowledge that your physicians have imparted to you. Let me implore you to devote your time to those books which alone can give support and consolation."

It so happened that Rosa Talbot was in one

of those intervals so common in the disease under which she was gradually sinking. She was certain of a long life, and had suggested to herself schemes worthy of the most robust health. She saw before her days of happiness as the wife of Cornish—the envy of some who already admired him — the despair of others who had for ever lost him; and strange it is that in these disgraceful moments, when 'envy, hatred, and jealousy,' are the thoughts, we sometimes derive the keenest pleasure. She had quite forgotten the hint of the doctors, and was in no mood to be lectured.

"I ask you, Susan," she said, rather abruptly, "if I can confide a secret to you—one you must not mention again hardly to yourself. I thought in you I had found a companion and a friend."

"And do you doubt it now, Rosa, when I am using the greatest privilege of a friend—that of an adviser? Had I not known how devoted this poor heart is to your service, I never should have intruded my counsels, or hazarded your last remark. Do not, I beseech you, Rosa,

look doubtingly upon me. I have no wish beyond your happiness, and I gladly devote myself to your service."

"Kiss me, Susan; forgive me if I offended you. I will shew you I still rely upon you,—that I still think you my dearest friend. I have not even told it to my mother, although she half guessed it from my manner. I am going to be married!"

Susan shrunk backwards with dismay, believing that the unrelenting disease under which her poor friend laboured had not only sapped her bodily, but impaired her mental strength. "Married!" she exclaimed.

"Yes, Susan, married; and before six weeks are elapsed, I shall be the wife of the only man I ever loved. Why do you look so fearfully upon me? I have not robbed *your* heart. Ever since I knew *him*, he has been devoted to me; and at last he has confessed his love, and I have accepted his offer."

It was impossible for Susan to doubt that Cornish had deceived her by his narration of the conversation; but she could not recover

herself. Before her, extended upon a sofa, from which she could not rise without assistance, reposed, if such a state could warrant the term, the bones of her friend,—evidently within the six weeks, she would be wedded to a colder bridegroom. That no skill could restore her was certain; and instead of preparing herself for her approaching dissolution, her heart was fixed upon an object evidently too unworthy of her.

At once to turn her thoughts from the bright prospect of life to the cold reality of death was a cruelty; but to allow her to linger longer in a disregard of her perilous condition was criminal. To refuse to listen to her tale of love would only have irritated the invalid; but to have joined in her rapture, Susan considered, would be highly blameable.

"Your mother," said Susan, after a pause, "is ignorant of this marriage. It is, my dear Rosa, very wrong in a daughter to conceal from her parent such a declaration as you have received. She is your best friend, as well as your mother. From her you should have no secret; for that which is improper for her to

know is unworthy of you to *do*. Let me call her;—let me, if you are unable to tell her yourself, impart to her this intelligence."

"On no account, Susan. I feel I have done wrong in relating the secret, I had promised never to reveal, to you, and pardon me if I say, I had expected from one who has ever called herself my friend, some expression of congratulation,—some wish for my happiness—my welfare—my health."

"And if my congratulations, Rosa, my wishes, could avail, how soon and how very fervently would I express them. I cannot, with the remembrance of the last injunctions of my father, picture that which never can exist. I would not have you violate your word further than you have done at this moment. He will be here shortly. Do an act of justice to yourself and to your mother. Tell him your surviving parent is your proper guardian and protector;—insist on his declaring to your mother the affection he has expressed for you; and warn him that, when he is gone, your duty to your parent will not be omitted."

"And why, if Captain Cornish wishes this a secret, should I disoblige him by revealing it?"

"It cannot long remain a secret, Rosa. You cannot buy your bridal-dress,—make any preparation for your marriage,—without your mother's knowledge; and therefore, even taking the subject in this light, it is better to make a virtue of necessity, and mention that yourself which your actions must declare hereafter. Besides this, how long do you think a lady has a secret, to which her maid is a stranger? I tell you, Rosa, that lovers always write notes, and ladies' maids always peep into them. What would your mother think if the first intimation of her daughter's engagement came through the scullery-maid? For no sooner will your maid have discovered it than Robert the butler will be made a confidant; it will be told as a secret, never to be divulged, to the housekeeper; the housekeeper will condescend to relate it to the coachman; the coachman will tell the groom that his young missus is going to be married; it will be whispered to the housemaid at some *accidental* meeting; and the last of the house-

hold below, the scullery-maid, will be entrusted with it. Since, my dear Rosa, you could not keep it yourself, it is hard to expect secrecy from others. On this ground alone, for at this moment I will not suggest any other, I call upon your good sense to second my proposition. Now I leave you, for here is Captain Cornish. He dines here to-day, of course,—a lover could not be so long absent as one evening!"

"Ah! ah!" faintly laughed the invalid. "And now, Susan, you will have time to read your sailor's letter over again, and to spoil half-a-dozen sheets of paper in attempting to answer it."

"No, no, Rosa," she replied, smilingly; "it is easy to be grateful; and the fewer words and the more actions, are the best responses. The Captain is here! I will escape through your maid's room."

That Susan was right in her conjectures as to the intuitive knowledge of her friend's maid was certain. Miss Waller, who, of course, could not be called by such a vulgar appellation

as Betsy, had brought her work very close to the door, and had heard every syllable which had been uttered. She regarded Miss Monckton as not one bit better than herself; and as Susan, in passing through her room, which was an unusual proceeding, apologized for disturbing her, she was quick enough to perceive the malicious sneer with which she was welcomed.

Even Susan, generally above the little weakness of the sex—curiosity, on closing the outer door, could not refrain from peeping through the keyhole; and saw the faithful Waller place her ear so close to the door which led to Rosa's apartment, that it was evident it was her intention to burden herself with the secret her dying mistress could not retain.

CHAPTER VIII.

IN WHICH IS SHEWN THAT A LADY'S MAID NEVER MISSES A GOOD OPPORTUNITY OF MAKING MISCHIEF.

"COME, sit close to me, Augustus. Now for the news; but first look at that clock,—a lover should be before, not after his time. I thought the lazy hand which marks the minutes never would gain the spot when five would strike. At last it came, and since then a quarter of an hour has flown."

Augustus took her hand; but there was that constrained look about him, that evident carelessness, as if he did from duty what might have

been expected from love. Usually he was cheerful, loquacious, and quick; now he was reserved, cautious, and silent. He squeezed her hand, and after passing his unemployed fingers hurriedly across his forehead, he said, "You have told your mother of our engagement."

"Indeed, Augustus, I have not;" but she said, as she recapitulated Susan's arguments, "The sooner she is told the better."

"It must *not* be," he added, with some vehemence. "Your mother would never give her consent, and we should become estranged even for the short time—" he paused,—he was evidently about to inflict the severest wound the invalid could receive; and even he, who having caught the hint given by Susan that a marriage would gain him the property without being long encumbered by the wife, forbore to mention death, when death was more certain than her marriage.

"I am certain of my mother's consent, Augustus. There is no one thing I could ask to which she would not accede; and this, the object nearest my heart,—this, which already has made

me strong and restored me to health, do you think she would refuse? Oh no! she is much too affectionately fond of me. You shall see how badly you have estimated her kindness. I will mention the subject to her this night, and to-morrow my Augustus shall be welcomed as her son-in-law."

"I would rather the secret were never divulged," said Captain Cornish, abstractedly; "for it is useless to believe this marriage could ever be consummated."

The invalid endeavoured to raise herself up, but in this she failed. Her hoarse voice seemed deeper as she added, "You have deceived me; you love another." Most fortunately for Captain Cornish he was saved the explosion which he himself had caused by the announcement of dinner; and he was quick enough to follow the servant, leaving Rosa in a state more easily imagined than described.

No sooner was he gone than Waller entered the room. Such was her invariable custom, as her mistress was scarcely ever left alone, and at this hour some refreshment was always offered. Waller was just as well aware of the secret as if

it had been placarded on the walls; and hating Susan with a hate only known to exist between ladies' maids and governesses, she resolved to frustrate any kind intentions which before long Rosa might be inclined to manifest in her last will. She had some money at her own disposal; and from the intimacy subsisting between her and Susan it was more than probable that some of that property would be left to her friend.

"I'll pay you off," said the jade to herself.

"I'm afraid you have exerted yourself too much, Miss," she remarked to Rosa; "and whilst Captain Cornish is eating his dinner with Miss Monckton you had better refresh yourself with a little broth."

"Surely my mother, Waller, dines at home?" said Rosa.

"Yes, Miss, she does; but as your mother's solicitor is here, and there seems some business of importance, your mother is not at dinner, nor will she join that party until eight o'clock."

"Well, well," said Rosa, "I am not sorry for the interruption, as the Captain will the sooner return, and I have much to say to him."

"I should rather think, Miss, it will keep

him the longer away. Perhaps he may be inclined to take one of his usual walks with Miss Monckton, and then it might be proper to await your mother's arrival, and then—"

"A walk!" interrupted Rosa, apparently somewhat disturbed by the intelligence.

"Oh, it's nothing unusual, Miss, I assure you. They do make the most unaccountable mistakes. One takes the wrong turning to the place she is going, and Captain Cornish takes the wrong one also, and somehow they both meet."

"Well, Waller, and what of all this? May not Captain Cornish by accident meet Miss Monckton?"

"Oh yes, Miss, no doubt; but then it's a pity when he sees her he does not look both sides of the hedges. They say walls have ears; I know quick-set hedges do not much interrupt the sound, however much they may hinder the sight. Bless you, Miss, Captain Cornish is over head and ears in love with you, and Miss Monckton is just as much in love with him. She can't keep her eyes off him; and the other day—"

"Well!" ejaculated Rosa, almost over-

powered even with the slight exertion required to produce the sound, "what occurred the other day?"

"Oh dear me, Miss, you would not ask me to speak of that which I quite accidentally heard; it would be quite improper,—you really must excuse me, Miss,—shall I get you some broth?"

The poison began to work. The very helpless situation of Rosa made her more alive to jealousy than otherwise her nature would have permitted. Now awakened, as it were, from her dreams of love by the cunning cruelty of her maid, she brought to her mind the different conversations she had held with Susan, that appeared to strengthen the suspicions Waller had awakened. "Yes, yes!" she exclaimed hurriedly, at intervals, "so she did, and admired him to my face. How blind—how blind is love!"

"Yes, Miss," said Waller, apparently unconscious of the mischief she had created,—"so it is, Miss. We have got a figure of it in the housekeeper's room, with a bandage round its eyes and with a pair of scales in its hands."

"That is the figure of Justice," said Rosa, catching at the last remark.

"Is it, Miss?" said the artful girl. "Well, I have heard that there is very little justice in love, for its course never ran smooth and without interruption."

"Oh!" sighed Rosa, "oh for one real friend! Waller, you have lived with me for four years, and I have ever been kind to you. Cannot I place confidence in you?"

"Oh certainly, Miss; nothing I should like so much. And as for secrets, I never say a word about them, although I think Miss Monckton will tell yours to your mother."

"What do you mean, Waller? Of what secret do you speak?"

"Oh nothing particular, Miss, only the secret of your heart. A person must be as blind as a beetle not to see how you change colour whenever the Captain is mentioned; and it makes me so uneasy. Ah! indeed I could tear his eyes out when I see that he comes into this room without hesitation, but that when he speaks to that beautiful girl below he is all of a tremble,

and I assure you, Miss, can scarcely say a word."

"Give me something to drink, Waller. My throat seems parched, and I can scarcely see. Do you really think Miss Monckton handsome?"

"The greatest of her enemies, Miss, cannot deny her great beauty, and every one admires her figure."

"False, false girl that she is! And to blind me with her letter from that sailor. Ah this has been a part of her perfidious plan!"

"Poor girl, Miss, she cannot help being in love with the Captain, he is so handsome; and when he talked to Miss Monckton yesterday, and she spoke of his honourable intention, his eyes were so lit up—"

At this confirmation of her worst suspicions, overpowered by her feelings, Rosa fell back in a swoon.

"Now is my time to call her up," said Waller, as she ran down stairs. "Oh dear, Miss," said the maid, as she bounced open the door, "do go up to Miss Rosa; she has fainted dead away." Susan heard no more, but instantly

rushed up stairs; whilst Captain Cornish, as he was not summoned, continued his dinner.

Susan found the report true; Rosa had fainted away. She immediately took the pillow from under her head, and placed her flat upon her back; and then, sprinkling her forehead with cold water, soon restored her to animation. But when her returning sense assured her of the presence of Susan, she turned away with unaffected dislike, and calling Waller, begged Miss Monckton would go down stairs and continue her dinner.

"I have finished, my dear Rosa," she said; "do let me stay;—I cannot leave you thus;—let me wipe your forehead."

"Do not touch me;—go, go."

The hurried manner in which this was articulated convinced Susan that the fit had left her so weak that her senses wandered; and fearing it might be the prelude to something more serious, she desired Waller to bathe her temple with vinegar and water, whilst she communicated the intelligence to her mother.

Mrs. Talbot had schooled her mind well.

Half her life had been a continued series of misfortunes. Her husband had been killed in a duel; her only son had been drowned in his passage to India; the last prop of the house was bending under the weight of disease, from which there was no hope of recovery. She had prepared herself to hear any tidings, for none could be worse than she anticipated. Fortune could not make her happiness; that was wrecked for ever; death could not unnerve her; she was prepared for the intruder whenever he might come. She had been busily employed in one of her many generous acts. Conceiving that it would be a pleasure to her daughter at her last moments to make some remuneration beyond what was hers for the undeviating affection and attention of Susan, Mrs. Talbot had been engaged with her solicitor for the transfer of two thousand pounds into her daughter's name; and this gift, she meditated, would be left to Susan, whilst the rest of the property which did not go in that direction Mrs. Talbot knew would be given to Captain Cornish. The last-named gentleman was quite at his ease. He was mak-

ing himself as comfortable as possible; and not hearing the report that his betrothed was deranged, he took care not to derange himself.

Susan followed Mrs. Talbot into the room; and the first words she heard were—"Do not, dear mother, let me be annoyed by that false girl," the sudden change of all affection for her—she had long looked upon Susan as her best companion,—without any apparent reason, convinced both the mother and Susan of the state of the invalid's mind.

Susan, yielding to the caprice, immediately retired; but she sat on the staircase, her face buried in her hands, and her eyes streaming with tears. She knew how surely her friend's days were numbered; and sincerely regretted that those days should be embittered by a disappointment too certain to occur, when her whole heart and soul should be upon holier and more comforting thoughts.

"There, she is gone, dearest," said Mrs. Talbot, as she beckoned Waller to leave the room. "Look at me, child; you know who *I* am, Rosa! Come, speak to your mother."

Rosa's look was a strong indication of what passed in her mind. She half imagined her mother deranged for asking the question. "Why, my dearest mamma, why do you ask if I know *you?*"

"Because, my dear, you do not appear to recollect Susan."

"I shall never forget her, to my last hour," replied the daughter.

"I hope and trust not, my dearest girl; half the world might have been searched and her equal never found. Never was there a more amiable, religious, excellent girl."

"Never was there a viler, more ungrateful hypocrite!" coolly answered the daughter.

The mother looked doubtingly at her daughter. "I see, Mother, what is passing in your mind; but I am neither mad nor foolish. I should have told you before, but that Cornish did not wish it."

A flush of suspicion crimsoned the face of Mrs. Talbot; but it as quickly evaporated. She had no suspicion beyond a second, and she was ashamed even of that. "Let me hear this

marvellous story, Rosa. I will answer for it some designing creature has made this mischief, —some whispering, tattling—"

"I beg your pardon, Madam," said Waller, suddenly entering. "I never make mischief—nor am I a whispering, tattling—"

"Leave the room, Waller," said Mrs. Talbot, as she rose from the sofa; "and when you have shut the door, see if you cannot sit at some distance from the keyhole. Now, Rosa, if you please, let me hear this secret. You are in no state of health to be flurried and annoyed by such romances. Waller, I should think, might find a better situation, where she will be kept at a greater distance."

"It is easily told, mamma; and I am ashamed of not having at once informed you. You know ever since my childhood that I have loved Augustus. He has declared his love for me, and I have accepted him." There was a palpable shudder which shook Mrs. Talbot's frame. She looked at her daughter with an eye of intense feeling; and yet not willing to shock her, begged her to continue her statement. "Miss

Monckton, mamma, availed herself of my situation,—has secretly met him; and Waller overheard him make a proposal, which she, too, gladly accepted."

"I beg your pardon, Miss," said Waller; "I did not tell you exactly *that!*"

Mrs. Talbot rang the bell twice, without heeding the intrusion. She desired the coach might be stopped which passed the gate that evening; ordered Miss Waller's *things* to be ready; paid her her wages, with a month's besides, packed her off from the vicinity of her daughter's room, and locked the outer door;—in five minutes the artful lady's maid was no longer a servant in Mrs. Talbot's house. She however made as much mischief as she could. She rushed into the parlour, and informed Captain Cornish that Miss Rosa was quite aware of his perfidy; that Miss Susan had mentioned the offer he had made to her; that the mother was determined the match should take place; and that she would mention what the Captain had said to *her* to every servant of the establishment.

Augustus did not care one straw about all she had said, or could say. He poured out another glass of wine; told the intruder she might either talk on or walk out; and helping himself to a most inviting peach, set to work to demolish it. Not even the impertinence of Waller could withstand the undisguised contempt of the Captain; and the maid retired, banging the door violently, and declaring herself the happiest creature in England, in thus escaping the society of a sickly mistress, and a disreputable upper-housemaid: an insult intended for Susan. Her flourish of tongues did no harm to any, Rosa's door was fortunately closed, and Mrs. Talbot, in the presence of her daughter, was hearing from Susan every word she either heard or uttered when in the society of Captain Augustus Cæsar Cornish.

CHAPTER IX.

IN WHICH OUR HERO WETS HIS FIRST COMMISSION, AND IS SHEWN WHAT FAVOUR AND AFFECTION MAY BE BESTOWED UPON THE SON OF A LORD AND THE SON OF A DOG-STEALER.

"WELL, I have no objection, Sir, in such a cause, to drink another glass; and here's to his good health; and long may he live to enjoy it, and to step up the ladder as quickly as he has got his promotion. Mr. Bowling, here's your very good health. There's not a drop of water in it, Sir,—it's a raw nip. And I beg your pardon, Sir, I ought to have said Lieutenant Bowling."

"Well said, old Pipes!" rejoined one of the

midshipmen ; " bring yourself to an anchor. You are not to be made drunk by a glass or two, any more than a Jamaica fly is to be killed by rum and sugar."

" I am not so much afraid of being hazy with this stuff as I was of being swamped in the salt-water, when the Pelican was wrecked," said Pipes. " Lord love you, Mr. Bowling, how I envied you being the last man on board. I think the crack I got from the sea must have sent me half on shore before I had time to strike out; and when I landed, I had grown as round as a puncheon, and with as much water in my hold as there was in the craft before she split."

" Take another nip, Pipes, and shake yourself—it will turn into grog, well mixed."

" Well, young gentlemen," said Pipes, " there's an example before you, as the Captain used to say when he punished a man;—there's Mr. Bowling, a lieutenant, and he'll live to be an admiral, if yellow Jack don't catch him on shore, or John Shark afloat—that's what it is to serve with captains who watch every step of

their officers. He's none of your short-hair and long-teeth gentlemen—king's hard bargains—who are always asleep, and for ever getting the middle-watch fever—do as he has done, and when I am boatswain of Portsmouth Dock-yard, some of you will be the Port-admirals. All I can say is, Lieutenant Bowling, I'm sorry you are going to leave us."

"Well, Pipes," said Bowling, "I'm sorry, although I'm glad that I am going to leave you —sorry, because we have all been some time together, and all wrecked together—here we are all drafted on board of another ship together—and friendship ever increases the more we are bound together in danger; but I'm glad I'm appointed to the Creole, because it is difficult for a promoted officer to do his duty rigidly in the same ship, and not give offence to some of his former messmates. Why, there's Pat Heavisides if he was in my watch, he'd grow thin in a week; he can't keep his eyes open to take leave of his old shipmate. Stir him up, Pipes."

Pipes took his call, and, placing it close to Heavisides' ear, blew a shrill note, which startled the heavy-headed slumberer.

"All hands wash decks, ahoy!" the boatswain bellowed; whilst another midshipman soused a basin of water in his face, and a third began to scrub his face with a rough towel. "Sprinkle and scrub, my lads," said Pipes, who held the poor devil's head as in a vice, whilst the first youngster continued to pour some more water over him, and the other one rubbed hard enough to remove the skin. "There now," he continued, "here you are, clean for muster; your eyes washed like a turtle's, and your lips sweet enough for a lady to taste. Stir up, man, you'll never get rid of that weekly account on your collar. Nelson never spoke to you—and Collingwood never took you by the hand. There, say good-bye to Lieutenant Bowling before you lose sight of him for ever;—he'll be a post-captain whilst you are lugging that fat carcase of yours about the lower deck, seeing it holy stoned."

The Creole was about to put to sea; and Bowling wished to shew himself no loiterer in his new situation. He shook his old messmates by the hand, wished them equal good fortune

with himself; and was about to do the same to Heavisides, who he found had again put his face on the back of his hands, and, leaning on the table, had gone fast asleep.

"Good-bye, Heavisides," he said; "one of these days we shall meet again, when I shall have the captain's permission to sleep, and you'll keep your eyes open in a squally middle watch. Shake him by the ear, Pipes."

Pipes gave him a pull of the lug, which would have lifted a sow from the ground.

"Take my blessing and my advice," continued Bowling; "keep awake whilst anything is to be obtained, and go to sleep when all the work is done."

"Mr. Heavisides," said a quarter-master, "the first lieutenant wants you on deck directly. You are to take Lieutenant Bowling's chest and hammock on board the Creole."

"It's devilish hard I am always to do the work when it's not my watch on deck," grumbled the sleepy-headed fellow.

"That's all fair enough," said Bowling. "You sleep on your own watch, so of course

you must be kept awake afterwards. Come, look sharp ! I want to be off; and I'm not going like a marine drafted into a strange ship, and sitting on his chest; look sharp and be back again, and then you shall take me."

"Soon on the stilts, you see," growled Heavisides. "Promotion makes us wonderfully proud; curse all such pride, say I." Thus he continued as he slowly went through the steerage and mounted the companion.

"Bless you, Mr. Bowling," said Pipes; "you and I have had some rough weather together; we started in life somewhat the same. You have both forereached and weathered on me; but I don't look with a jealous eye; you deserve all you have got. But I do not think I could ever bring myself to pipe the side for that heavy-headed fellow, or for young Curlew, who is to pass to-morrow, and who has got his commission waiting for him at the admiral's office. That fellow has never done any one thing but steer the captain's boat, or pick flowers for the admiral's daughters; he hardly knows the stem from the stern, and has no more notion of

seamanship than a Newfoundland dog has of making a silk veil."

The young gentleman here alluded to was the Hon. William Curlew, the eldest son of Viscount Seagull. Seagull was an admiral; and his son was to rise as rapidly as the service would permit. He was now only sixteen; he was to pass the following day; and whatever questions might be asked, there was little fear of any examination as to the certificate of his age.

In those days passing went by favour; a youngster of no birth and less pretensions stood an awful chance of being sent back for six months; whilst such a hobble-de-hoy as Curlew was quite sure of success, and of advancement. The passing was to take place on board the Creole; and as the captain of that frigate was the senior officer, and Curlew was the only midshipman to be examined, the captain availed himself of the event to do two services at once —one in the way of a dinner-party, and the other as the senior officer of the examination; and both events were to take place at the same time.

It was six o'clock when the captains and Cur-

lew arrived on board the Creole. Curlew had some apprehensions which nothing could entirely eradicate; he knew his ignorance and inexperience, and had been stuffed by Pipes in the art of bending a top-sail;—the names even of the ropes used on such an occasion, not being in his vocabulary. As to navigation, he was in that respect in the happiest state of ignorance; he might by some very great exertion have mastered both the taking of the altitude and the working of the latitude; but as to the longitude by chronometer, or by lunar observation, these were quite out of his reach, and subjects he had never studied or contemplated.

By some great oversight of the captain's, the new lieutenant, Mr. Bowling, was invited; for, on these occasions, it would have been as well if no ear overheard the examination. Bowling was the rough son of the service. Curlew was born in the lap of luxury; the path of existence was made smooth for him. Cakes and jams had accompanied him to sea; money was only asked for, and had; and promotion was the natural consequence of great parliamentary in-

fluence. His conversation was of lords; his dreams of ribbons and stars, earned without danger or difficulty. Exactly opposite to him at table sat Bowling ; his eye quick and intelligent; his ear attentive whenever anything relative to the service was the subject, and coldly indifferent, when the conversation turned upon Lord Seagull and his mighty relatives.

The first part of the dinner, the soup and fish, having been dispatched, and the meat and poultry having replaced them, the servants were sent out of the cabin, and the examination of the Hon. William Curlew began. And this examination was in order to ascertain if the said William Curlew was, in every respect, qualified to take charge of one of his Majesty's ships,—to navigate her through the pathless seas,—to extricate her from difficulties and dangers,—and to lead her into action against the foes of his country, with such seamanship and ability as would enable him to conduct himself and his ship with credit to the service.

There is no examination which should be more rigid; the lives of hundreds are at the

caprice of the captain; to him every man looks in the hour of danger; and from his eagle eye is courage imparted, when many might waver. Sometimes "the impervious horrors of the lee-ward shore" are only to be averted by the most consummate seamanship; and when, far away from any land, disaster overtakes the ship—the furious gale and angry sea raging to destroy her — then is the talent of the seaman shewn to the best advantage, and difficulties, apparently insurmountable, easily overcome.

"Pay attention, Mr. Curlew, to the question I am about to ask," said the senior captain; "and do not answer without due reflection." Curlew turned as pale as ashes; he was quite certain that he could not have answered any question of navigation, even if it were only to navigate himself from the midshipman's berth to the boatswain's store-room, for he never had ventured into such holes as the fore cockpit. "Now, Sir," continued the captain, with a very grave and officer-like countenance, "have the goodness to answer this question:—'If a ham is placed before you at a captain's table, who

has not more money than he can spend, and it is requisite to practice economy, how would you carve it?'"

"Ah!" ejaculated the second captain, who was very much in that predicament, and who thought he might pick up a little useful knowledge himself, "Ah!—let us hear, Mr. Curlew."

"I should," replied Curlew, with a little assumption of knowledge—"I should cut the ham right through the middle."

"Quite wrong—quite wrong," interrupted the second captain, laying a great stress upon the repetition of the words. "If that plan were pursued, the juice would escape from both sides, the ham would dry up sooner, and would become unpalatable, hard, and useless."

"I am rather inclined to differ in opinion with you, Captain Skinner," said the junior captain, who was a man of large fortune, and a particular favourite of the admiral's. "I have remarked that at the admiral's table the ham is always cut in the manner described by Mr. Curlew; and——"

"It should be cut, Captain Freightall," in-

terrupted Skinner, "close to the knuckle, in such a manner as to occasion the smallest surface. I assure you I have tried it merely experimentally, and I can assure you, my dear Freightall" — here he gave a very intimate and confidential nod,—"on this subject you may rely upon my experience."

"I must say, Sir," said Curlew, "that I am indebted to you for your suggestion. Perhaps I may be allowed to say, that I should cut it from the knuckle for economy, but through the middle as most savoury."

"Bravo!" called out the captain of the Creole, "answered most properly. Take a glass of wine, Curlew. Mr. Bowling, will you do me the favour to join us?"

"Have you any questions to ask Curlew?" said the senior captain, addressing Freightall.

"Yes," said the young captain; "I should like to know if it was blowing hard at south-west how he would run in and anchor in Plymouth Sound."

"Oh, my dear Freightall, it would occupy an hour to answer all the details of bending

cables, striking masts, soundings, and so on. Here, Curlew, my boy; let us have some practical knowledge. Let me see you carve this fowl without withdrawing your fork once; and mind how you do it, as you will have to eat the legs devilled for breakfast to-morrow."

When the question relative to Plymouth Sound was asked, Bowling, who had devoted his attention to his plate, raised his head. It was a question which involved local knowledge, and required some seamanship properly to answer; but when his captain changed the question, he saw at once that the passing was a mere farce, and that "a smile would best become him."

"Take a glass of Champagne with me," said Skinner, "before you begin. Your health and promotion. Do you sail to-morrow, Freightall?"

"Why, yes; I believe I do," said Freightall, with some indifference. "There are some privateers lurking about Honduras, and I suppose I shall, as usual, be made to cruise there; but I shall lose the ball at Spanish Town, which is hard upon me."

In the meantime, Curlew was hacking the fowl; and the captain of the Creole was keeping up a hurried conversation about Lord Seagull, and in his influence soon procuring promotion; Captain Skinner had acted the part of a listener, and the rôle of a gourmand; no one looked at the lacerated piece of poultry, and the fork had been withdrawn a dozen times. The servants were rung for, the clerk was ordered to bring in the passing certificate; it was signed without any reluctance; Mr. Curlew was voted capable of taking charge of any ship, and his promotion was sure to follow immediately, as an admiralty vacancy would occur in consequence of the invaliding of an officer, who was good enough to make a vacancy rather than run the chance of a court martial, which might have made him minus his half-pay for ever.

There were many who had served long and meritoriously, who were anxiously watching the event. Many were reported as first on the admiralty list; some, indeed, had received

letters from their friends, assuring them that the first lord had actually promised,—and who could doubt the veracity of a first lord; others, again, looked, as it were through a telescope reversed, and saw the object of their greatest hope diminished in size, and far off in the distance; but all had a chance, for all were passed who looked forward to the reward of the service. Bowling, perhaps, was the only indifferent person, as he had got his commission, and no one could overtop him. He saw by his captain's manner that Curlew had the best chance, and began to think that he might be asked to change ships in order to accommodate a man of Curlew's influence.

The medical department and the invaliding officers were in those times not overscrupulous. Mr. Buzzard was brought before them. He complained of all sorts of diseases; and was perfectly certain he should die if he remained. He had a violent dyspepsia, the everlasting complaint for invaliding. The medical man examined him, and was quite certain he was unfit

for the service in these climates. The invaliding papers were signed; they were sent to receive the proper approval from the Admiral's pen, and the next morning the Honorable William Curlew was appointed lieutenant in the room of John Buzzard, invalided.

CHAPTER X.

IN WHICH MASTER CUPID IS BEGINNING TO SHARPEN HIS ARROWS AND PREPARE HIS BOW.

ALTHOUGH Captain Collingwood and Captain Horatio Nelson had left the station, they both had left Bowling under the special protection of the admiral. He had likewise made the acquaintance of his late Majesty William the Fourth, and had received a promise from him of future support. Bowling was amongst officers, as amongst seamen, an universal favourite; and a circumstance soon occurred, which shewed how British seamen followed an

officer in whom they have the greatest confidence.

No sooner was Bowling fairly installed in his dignity as lieutenant of the Creole, had taken leave of his hammock for ever, and had made his bed in a cot, than his full heart seemed to overflow with satisfaction. He sat down in his cabin, and reflected on his past life, which flitted before him as a shadow ; he thought how *she*, if she valued his existence, would rejoice in his advancement; and felt proud in having leaped barriers apparently insurmountable, and by his own exertions, backed by the quick eye of such men as Nelson and Collingwood, rose into notice and esteem. He resolved to write to the German doctor, and to his Susan, before the Creole sailed; and he had not much time to lose.

The packet had hove in sight, and her signal had been made as the sun went down. Buzzard was invalided to a moment. Had the mail arrived that night, which, luckily or not, the dying away of the sea-breeze prevented, even Curlew might have lost his promotion, as a young lord was sent out in her to fill the first

vacancy. The Creole was allowed to wait the anchorage of the packet to receive her letters; and Bowling had passed one night as a lieutenant in all the glory of having charge of a watch. He never winked during those four hours; the time seemed too short for the summing up of his happiness. He gave the midshipman of his watch permission to turn in; and he preferred being left alone in his felicity rather than be observed by another.

The sea-breeze came down late and strong; and the Creole having lost the opportunity of going out of Port Royal with the land breeze, was allowed to remain a day longer at anchor.

Ever since Bowling had embarked in the collier he had not received a letter from any one. He was fourteen when he first cut out his own life; he was now passed twenty; and often did he rebuke himself for the neglect of the doctor, to whom he was much indebted; once only he had written to Susan, and once to her mother, in both cases inclosing money, but he had received no answer. This made him think that he was neglected, or that his letter had mis-

carried. He never thought of the money, his mind was much too liberal for that; it had started in the right course, and if wrecked it was a matter of indifference to the possessor, had Susan not had some influence over it.

The letters for his former ship arrived; she was no more; but the crew existed. On looking over these eagerly sought and welcome sheets, there was one for Mr. Thomas Bowling of his majesty's ship the Pelican; and Mr. Heaviside was sent with it to the Creole. The boat's crew seemed to partake of the heaviness of the officer, who was almost asleep under the awning, and who cared not how long they were in pulling from ship to ship, as he was seated, his face protected from the sun, and the sea-breeze blowing delightfully strong.

"Come, jump up, Heavisides," said Bowling, who saw the sleepy fellow loitering alongside, "there is your pendants with the recall flying from the guard-ship." Heaviside had never seen that, but Bowling knew the signal well. "Come, hand yourself up the side, you are as long getting under weigh as a Spanish line-of-battle-ship."

"It's only a letter for you, Bowling."

"*Only* a letter for *me;* if I had known what it was, I would have swam for it; hand it here; away with you back again, and see if you can't keep your eyes open, and be more active in future."

Bowling took the letter; he did not dare trust himself to look at the direction lest he should be tempted to break through all discipline and read it on the quarter-deck. Two steps lodged him on the main-deck; two more and he was in his cabin. It was a woman's hand; and the first word he saw was the pleasant of the whole—Susan. Greedily his eyes devoured it, and thus it ran :—

"There never was a letter written which was more warmly welcomed than yours from Jamaica, and never did a grateful heart more truly beat than mine in its reception. I valued your remembrance of me more than the enclosure, which I instantly forwarded to my mother, and for which, with the two shillings, you are my creditor. I will not deny to you that your letter

awakened in me the warmest wish that we might meet again: that with my own eyes I might behold the lad I taught, grown into an officer and a man. That day, I hope, is not far distant; and until it arrives, I shall live in the hope of its consummation—then will I pour forth my gratitude with more words than you will hear with pleasure."—('Dear little soul,' said Bowling to himself, 'if she was to spin a yarn as long as all my namesakes' placed together, she never would tire me of listening.')—"And then you shall be fully satisfied that I have remembered you, although you were far distant, and that the breeze has borne your name upon its wings. You will be delighted to hear that my mother continues in excellent health. My situation as companion to Miss Rosa Talbot has enabled me as yet to supply her wants; but this resource will soon, I fear, be cut off. This young and beautiful girl will soon be dead; indeed, each day's dawn seems the last she is destined to see. Still she clings to life, and still sees her health restored, and visions of earthly happiness within her reach. In this

dreadful state, when the mind should only dwell on its hereafter, we cannot wean her from this life; and even at this moment, attenuated in form, a mere living skeleton, she has engaged herself in marriage, and urges her mother to the completion of the ceremony. I cannot write more on this subject; it pains me to think how we are all wedded to this world and its transitory enjoyments. May that God who has sheltered you from the storm and shielded you from the enemy, watch over, keep and preserve you: there is no night in which this is not repeated by me. Remember the instructions of your youth. Courage, boldness, enterprise, may merit promotion in this world; be it yours, by your conduct and virtue, to establish a well-grounded hope of an eternity of reward. Rest assured, that no earthly calamity can obliterate my remembrance of you, as no other person can inspire the gratitude which it will ever be my greatest pride to acknowledge. Therefore, if the knowledge that my prayers are ever for your welfare — your name ever on my lips— and your memory ever in my heart—be accep-

table to you, receive the assurance with the acknowledgment that

"I am, ever affectionately, yours,

"SUSAN."

"P.S.—If my wishes could be realized, I should receive frequent letters from the West Indies."

Bowling read the epistle twice—lovers always do that, or say they do; then he kissed it—that seems requisite; then he overhauled the seal—it was a leaf—"I only change in death," the motto. There was no mistake! Bowling was in love forthwith, and armed himself with desperate resolves the better to merit his former preceptress. "D— it," said he (very improperly, no doubt), "if I don't make myself a captain in a year, I'll swallow the fid of the maintopmast. Something must turn up—the Creole has ever been a lucky vessel — pirates and privateers are plentiful—the sooner we are at sea the better — but before we go, hurrah for an answer!"—

"My dear Miss Monckton," (one never loses

by civility, thought Tom; it's as cold as a norther at Vera Cruz, but it's very respectful), "I have this instant received your letter, without any date or any departure, so that I am adrift how to shape the course of my answer. I never was so happy in all my life. All the prizes that once carried the flag of an enemy, and were hauled down by the British sailor, never gave half the pleasure to the captors as your dear letter did to me. You are the prize I seek; although it will somehow be reversed, for I have already struck *my* colours to the fire of your eyes. Lord love you for the seal! Keep true to your motto, as the trade wind to tropical climates; and when you do die, if I live to step up the ladder, you shall die like a dolphin—a gold colour! I'll soon send your mother as many doubloons as will buy the state carriage of the king, and pay more taxes than the prime minister votes for in a year! I see your dear face in every cloud. I hear your sweet voice in every breeze; and in the midnight watch, your fancied presence keeps me ever awake and lively. I shall write to you again soon—I think I am speaking to you now.

So believe me—ay, from stem to stern, from the keel to the upper deck, in calm, in breeze, and in storm—the vessel you may command until the timbers rot, and the hull is dismantled.

"TOM BOWLING.

"N.B.—I see you put P.S. I'm made a lieutenant, and am now Lieutenant Bowling, of his Majesty's ship Creole, at your service. I was so taken up with you in the first start of my letter, that I never thought of myself. We are off on a cruise directly, so pray excuse the scrawl. My best love to your mother. Do tell the doctor I'm alive, and can sing a good song, all about you; but I can't play an overture as he does yet."

Now came the difficulty. Tom was resolved to send a seal which should be a clincher, and say more than he dared to write. He rummaged every part of his property, but he could find nothing to suit him. He found one old *seal* with a sunflower; but Tom was not aware of the fabulous properties ascribed to that gaudy plant, and he could not twist the sun into anything applicable

to present circumstances. Then he got hold of another, which was, a violet peeping out from under its natural covering, and meant as emblematic of modesty, with a motto, "Fleur sans ambition je me cache." That was quite enough for Tom; he threw the seal overboard, and was angry with himself for having kept anything French about him. "I've got it!" said he. "An anchor is the emblem of hope. I should like to stamp the letter with the print of the best bower, but that's too large, and so is the sheet-anchor. *That* would suit me best," thought Tom, "but an anchor's the thing, and a purser's anchor's the best. Here's two of them, with a cable, that's meant for affection, twisted round them, and with two anchors and cables he's not likely to part." Pleased with the idea, Tom borrowed the purser's coat, and with one of the buttons stamped the seal of his letter. "She'll understand it," said he. "Leave a girl who's in love alone for making a sentiment out of a bread-bag, and she'll turn it somehow or other until she makes it answer her wishes. And now only let me get athwart hawse of a

Frenchman, and if I don't make such a figure that my name shall remain in the despatch or my carcass feed the sharks, my name is not Tom Bowling—and to be sure I have some doubts of that, so I withdraw it, and add—there are no snakes in Virginia."

"The letter-bag is going to be closed directly, Sir," said a midshipman, who tapped at his door. Bowling gave the letter a kiss, in the fond hope that Susan might kiss the same place; then handing his despatch to the midshipman, to be given to the Captain's clerk, he went on deck to hear the news.

Scarcely had he got on deck before he saw the Honourable Charles Curlew coming alongside, in a lieutenant's uniform, steering the Captain's gig, which he managed so admirably that she shot right under the fore channels with her bow under the anchor. When with a stern boat-hook the gig was hauled aft to the gangway, and Mr. Curlew stepped on board, it was evident his lofty blood was not circulated in plebeian veins. His memory was very dull, and he did not recognise the man with whom he had

dined the day before. He begged to see the Captain, and was forthwith ushered into his cabin. Bowling looked at him with all the honest indignation of a real British seaman. "I can fathom his heart," he said to himself. "He thinks he will pass me in the service; and whilst I am drudging out life as a first-lieutenant, he will be lolling on the sofa in the Captain's cabin, giving his orders to exercise the men whilst he is slumbering in inactivity. But if he passes me, and I have an opportunity of distinguishing myself, I am mistaken." As Bowling was pondering these things in his mind, and looking at that low, miserable place, Port Royal, the sentinel from the cabin-door informed him that the Captain wished to speak to him. Bowling comprehended at once the case, and made up his mind before he went down the companion.

"Sit down, Mr. Bowling," said the Captain. Mr. Curlew managed to bend one joint in his aristocratic neck, in return for the acknowledgment the open-hearted Bowling made of recognition.

"The fact, Mr. Bowling, is this," said his Captain, "and the shorter we cut these matters the better. The Admiral wishes Mr. Curlew to join my ship; Mr. Curlew wishes it himself; I wish it, so of course you have no objection."

The Creole was a frigate; the vessel into which Bowling was to exchange was a gun-brig. Curlew knew that his next step was sure, and that he was very ill calculated to command a vessel. Besides which, gun-brigs are proverbially dangerous, are employed, generally speaking, in minor affairs, carry letters, bring despatches, run to St. Jago de Cuba for wine, or are bundled down to the Havannah for cigars. Then in the navy a gun-brig is thought a very inferior affair, both as to size and respectability, whilst a frigate is the principal object of every seaman's heart. Even the Captain feels himself shelved when exchanged into a line-of-battle ship, as his hope of prize-money (although there are many instances to the contrary) dwindles into despair. Bowling knew well how dangerous it was in those times for a young man without interest to combat the wishes of his Captain; and feeling

that it was better in this instance to make a virtue of necessity, he at once said, "I have no objection to make, Sir. I should have been proud to have served under you, and to have merited your praise, as I have already merited and obtained that of Captain Nelson and Captain Collingwood; but since the Admiral wishes it, and you request it——"

"Stop, Mr. Bowling; I do not request; I wish it."

"The terms in my mind, Sir," said Bowling, with a little quickness, "are the same, and I assent to it."

"I will arrange the affair in a moment, Mr. Bowling," said Curlew. "I believe the gig is alongside; the order will be on board in less than a quarter of an hour; it is, I believe, already signed; and by sunset, Sir, I hope to have joined——"

"You had better dine here, Curlew."

"Thank you, Sir, I am engaged to dine with the Admiral. Good morning, Mr. Bowling." Mr. Curlew jumped down the side, and Bowling as quickly descended to his cabin. It required

very little time to prepare himself for the change, and he felt some pride in having a command, however insignificant it might appear. "Give me only a chance," he said to himself, "one hour of the flood-tide of opportunity, and I'll cut out my own path in the service, or I will make Jack Shark a present of my carcass."

CHAPTER XI.

IN WHICH OUR HERO BECOMES A REAL HERO, AND IS NOT TO BE CONFOUNDED WITH HERO AND LEANDER.

"THAT's the way of the world," said Bowling, "the crowd are elbowed to make way for peers; and thousands are sacrificed that one may be great. I have lost by the exchange, for a young lieutenant is better placed under the protection of a powerful Captain than under chance and his own exertions; but here am I, Captain of his majesty's sloop, Zebra,—Captain to all intents and purposes; and now is my time to do my utmost."

The following morning the Creole and the Zebra weighed at daylight, and went out of Port Royal with the land breeze. Bowling surveyed through his glass the well-set sails of the frigate, the neatness of her rigging, and her clean man-of-war-like appearance. The Zebra was very dingy outside, and very much in want of paint inside. The crew had been accustomed to the free-and-easy system ; and in those days a ten-gun brig, commanded by a lieutenant, was nothing more or less than a kind of tender to the admiral's ship. But Bowling had served under one of the most careful men in the navy ; and in after years, husbanding the stores of the ship, became the object of Captain Collingwood's greatest attention. There is an anecdote told of that captain, that during the hottest of the fire at the battle of St. Vincent, Collingwood, who commanded the Excellent, observed the new fore-topsail, which he had bent only the day before the action, almost cut to pieces by the shot.

" Dear me," he said to the boatswain, " how very annoying ! They will quite spoil that sail,

I declare; we ought to have bent an old one before we began to engage." Serving under a man like that makes an officer. The Zebra was ordered off to Barbadoes with despatches; and directly the sea breeze came down, she made the best of her way to her destination. The Creole parted company, and ran down to the westward. Every hour of every day was turned to advantage by Bowling. Before he had got a hundred miles from Jamaica, no one would have recognised the Zebra. An active captain makes a vigilant crew. At last, having toiled up against the trade-winds, the Zebra, on the 5th of February, 1794, made the island of Martinique at daylight, in the morning. Bowling was first awakened to all the consciousness of his responsibility when he was informed that there were several strange sail in sight, all of which appeared to be men-of-war. He was instantly on deck. The fleet were not distant more than six miles, and were soon made out to consist of a three-decker, four line-of-battle-ships, eight frigates, and six vessels of a smaller class.

The Zebra sailed as well as those naval coffins, ten-gun brigs, can be expected to sail. The breeze was light, and that was an advantage. Day had scarcely dawned before one of the frigates had her skysails set, and was standing towards the Zebra in chase.

"These cannot be Frenchmen," said Bowling to one of his midshipmen,—he had but two,—one about forty, and the other about twenty-five years of age. "They look much too smart aloft; their masts do not rake enough, and the sails are too well set. Well, at any rate, the frigate has paid us the same compliment, for there is the signal to shew our number."

The Zebra answered the signal, when the recal flag was hoisted, and she joined the fleet under the command of Sir John Jervis, who, with his ships, having on board about seven thousand troops under the command of Sir Charles Grey, was intent on the reduction of Martinique.

As small vessels were of the greatest service, and the despatches of very little consequence, the Zebra was kept under the admiral's orders.

There were only two French vessels of war in the ports of the island. The Bienvenue, a frigate of thirty-two guns, was at Fort Royal, and an eighteen-gun corvette was at St. Pierre.

For the purpose of dividing the force of the enemy, the British troops landed at three different points considerably distant from each other. The plan had been ably drawn out, and British officers of high spirit and undaunted courage led on the divisions. They bore down all opposition; victory after victory was the result of high discipline and able tacticians; and by the sixteenth of the month, the whole island, with the exception of the Forts Royal and Bourbon, surrendered to the English. In this affair, so hastily dismissed, the seamen were not unemployed. They were landed in great numbers, and dragged cannon and mortars up heights considered inaccessible, and which seemed to defy all exertions. Neither were they tame spectators of the storming the very important post of Monte Catharine. To those hardy sons of the ocean nothing seemed imprac-

ticable: they cut roads through thick woods, they made passages across rivers, they filled up the shallow parts with stones, and covered them with branches of trees; they levelled banks by removing vast fragments of rocks, and with undaunted spirit succeeded in placing howitzers and mortars on the summit of a hill so steep that a loaded mule could not walk up in a direct ascent.

The French troops and seamen beheld with wonder and astonishment the completion of a work never contemplated by them. They saw the commanding heights bristling with cannon, and perceived the destructive shell, fired with unerring precision, bursting over their heads. It was at this moment, when the first discovery almost paralyzed the exertions of the enemy, that Bowling,* with the boats of the squadron, made a dash at the frigate; he pushed bravely into the Carénage. It was noonday, and no concealment could be resorted to. The enemy lay

* The name of the gallant officer who commanded the boats on this occasion, was, Lieutenant Richard Bowen, of the Boyne, the admiral's ship.

chain-moored within fifty yards of the shore; the walls of Fort Louis were covered with troops; the officers cheered on their men, and pointed to the coming boats as bringing only a cargo of carcasses to rot in the water. The broadside of the frigate was opened; the grape, canister, and langrage whistled over the heads of the brave fellows, who, undismayed at the shower which fell around, pushed fearlessly and gallantly forward. Every soldier on the walls was urged to deliberation and coolness; the men on board the frigate fired with steadiness and dexterity; the boarding pikes seemed to grow from her sides; the soldiers appeared animated with more than national vanity to defend the ship; and the roar of the guns and the cheers of the men resounded to the hills. Steadily and undauntedly, without wavering from their course, the gallant seamen, in the face of this fire, approached the frigate. Bowling's voice was heard cheering them onwards to the undertaking. If courage had been wanting, his bold front and daring manner would have inspired the most timid. He waved his hat; he gave the cheers;

he was first of the foremost; and as he coolly remarked, that at their approach the fire of the frigate became less and less destructive, he called out, "Now, now, my lads—success to the first on board!"

There was no lack of strength in the different boats; each seaman, catching the enthusiasm of his officer, bent his back to the oar as he answered the cheer. The sea seemed alive from their exertions; and in spite of all the fire of the Fort, the blazing of the frigate, and the tumultuous voices which seemed to come from thousands of the enemy, the boats dashed alongside. The wonder-stricken enemy crouched when they saw what danger had been overcome; a panic reigned where confidence had previously existed; and after a resistance, which was only the dying embers of former courage, the frigate was boarded and carried.

The crew availed themselves of their vicinity to the shore to escape by swimming; and Bowling, finding the fire of the Fort too warm for security,—the frigate not having her sails

bent, and it being impossible to send men aloft, exposed to the tremendous fire of musketry,—placed his men in the boats, and taking his prisoners with him, returned to the ships. His success was the signal for another attack upon the town of Fort Royal. A number of scaling ladders, made of long bamboos, tied together by stout lines, were soon ready. The Asia, a sixty-four, and the Zebra,* were ordered to be in readiness to enter the Carénage for the purpose of battering the lower and exposed parts of Fort Louis, and to cover the boats intended to land a vast number of men to aid in the assault, whilst a detachment of the army, advancing with field pieces, would draw or divide the attention of the assailed.

The 20th was the day fixed for the attack, and the Asia and Zebra weighed to perform their allotted duty. The Asia had a Monsieur de Tourelles, the former lieutenant of the port, acting in the voluntary situation of pilot; but no sooner did she approach the Carénage, than

* Captain Faulkner commanded the Zebra, Bowling being merely the personification of these gallant officers.

the pilot wavered; he refused openly to take charge of the ship, giving as his reason that he was insufficiently informed of the situations of the shoals; but much more probably he relinquished his charge from the real dread of what he might reasonably expect from his perfidy, had the assault failed, and one of the many chances of war thrown him into the hands of his old companion and governor of the French forces, General Rochambeau.

Bowling, who followed as close as prudence could dictate in the wake of the Asia, perceiving her baffled in her attempts, disregarded the danger of the shoals, and, without waiting for orders, stood in unprotected into the anchorage. Then was the moment seized by the French to devote the sloop to destruction; and every gun which could be brought to bear, poured forth its contents at the Zebra; they had no other mark for a target. The Asia was too large a ship to venture without a pilot; but the Zebra, with a careful leadsman, cleared the tails of the shoals; and Bowling, taking an exposed position, and apparently ignorant of

any danger, piloted the sloop in. In vain the enemy continued to pour at him their masses of round and grape; Fortune, they say, favours the brave; the sails still performed their duty, though perforated with balls; the Zebra dashed singly on; and Bowling, in spite of all opposition, run the vessel close to the walls of the fort.* Captain Bowling† now leapt overboard at the head of his sloop's company, and assailed and took this important post before the boats could get on shore, although rowed with all the force and animation which characterize English seamen in the face of an enemy.

It is now many years since this daring, this chivalrous success was achieved; and many, many of the brave fellows who assisted our gallant hero in his unexampled exploit, are gathered to their fathers. The long peace, which has nearly obliterated the remembrance of the many gallant services of the navy, has seen most of the officers employed in the expedition against Martinique in their graves. Day

* James's Naval History.

† Sir John Jervis's Dispatch.

after day blots out from the list of life men who have fought and bled for their country, and who are forgotten by the rising generation. The navy—England's hope and firmest stay, rots gradually in the Medway and the Plym; her hardy veterans linger out the last remains of life in Greenwich, or a poor-house; the works of the historian become vapid and uninteresting; and naval novels are made the vehicles of knowledge, and are the last embers of history raked together to keep the navy before the eyes of the public: thus is Tom Bowling's career made to embody the services of many of the greatest men our navy has produced.

Sir John Jervis was always known as a man who duly estimated the services of an officer—he could not but see the great gallantry of the action; but he was not slow to perceive its rashness. It is said, "success justifies the means;" but if the success of one act of temerity induces others to seek equally perilous undertakings, the list of killed and wounded would be fearfully increased, and every man whose promotion was slow would attempt a desperate act,

and in all probability fail, to the great prejudice of the service. Bowling's success had the greatest effect upon the French general; and, at his request, commissioners were appointed to discuss the terms of surrender, which shortly afterwards took place.

Bowling felt himself a rising and a lucky man. The desperate service he had accomplished he knew would be passed from mouth to mouth, and that for the future his name would be known. It was eight o'clock on the morning of the twenty-second that Bowling sat at breakfast with his senior midshipman. The island had afforded a few nautical luxuries; and soft bread, fruit, and other delicacies, in a ten-gun brig, covered the table.

"I think, Sir, it is strange that the Admiral has not ordered us to proceed to Barbadoes," remarked the mid; he was old enough to hazard a thought, even in the presence of his commander.

"I expect the order every minute; the fleet will sail to-morrow, or next day; everything is arranged, and the island ours; and of all

the islands which dot these seas, there is none so lovely, none so useful, as Martinique. If I were prime minister England should never part with it again."

"When the peace comes, Sir, it will be given back, and then we shall have to take it again next war. For my part, if I were not professional, I should wonder what could be the use of war. We make war, man fleets, collect armies, fight like devils—cut every man's throat because he is of a different nation—take islands, forts, and settlements—sacrifice the lives of millions, and then comes negotiations for peace; and every place we have taken is given back again. It appears odd, that men with heads on their shoulders should consent to have them lopped off at this game of war, merely that the caprice of an emperor, or the folly of a king, should be gratified. I don't know how many wars I have not seen, or how many times I have been shot at, and poked at; and here I am, at forty-five, 'a young gentleman',* with a weekly account on the collar of my coat."

* Midshipmen, although as old as the hills, with their

"I'm all for war," said Bowling. "I hate a Frenchman—that frog-eating, monkey-looking people, are my detestation. Damn it!—I would make war for the value of a looking-glass, and ——"

"The Admiral has the signal up, Sir, for you," interrupted the other young gentleman.

"The devil he has?" was the reply. "Steward, my coat, cocked hat, and sword. Man the boat—look sharp;—never mind me; finish your breakfast." And in a moment, Bowling was on deck, down the side, and on board the Boyne. He was met at the gangway by a lieutenant, who conducted him to Captain Grey, and Captain Grey announced him to the Admiral.

"Sit down, Mr. Bowling," began Sir John Jervis; "I have been so occupied that I have not had time to express my high opinion of the service you have performed. You are but of a few months' standing as a lieutenant; but I shall take care to insure your promotion. Bear

heads as snow-covered as the Andes, are called "Young gentlemen!"

well in mind, however, that your temerity might have sacrificed many a man, and that your success is as much a miracle as your preservation. Here is your appointment as acting commander of the Echo. You will sail directly under sealed orders. You may consider yourself as confirmed in your rank; and with this I give you the assurance that I shall never lose sight of you. Good morning, Captain Bowling."

CHAPTER XII.

THE BRAVE ASCEND THE LADDER OF ASSAULT, AND EACH STEP LEADS TO PROMOTION.

Bowling flew up the hatchway. Captain Grey congratulated him warmly. He was down the side; and a very few minutes saw him on board the Zebra. The young gentleman, who was quite sure his commander had been sent for to receive his sailing orders, had got the messenger passed, and all ready for weighing. At the sight of the midshipman Bowling suddenly felt that he had been remiss in his duty—that the intoxication of pleasure at the an-

nouncement of his promotion had made him guilty of a certain remissness, if not injustice. He immediately returned to the flag ship, and requested to see the admiral.

Sir John was much occupied, but desired Captain Bowling might be sent to him. Bowling was no hand at a speech; and as he began to stammer something about gratitude, Sir John cut him unceremoniously short.

"If, Captain Bowling, you have returned here to make a speech about gratitude, you might have saved yourself the trouble. I have promoted you because you have done a desperate service, which has been crowned with success. You may rely upon this, that had you not merited, I should not have promoted you."

Bowling, when the admiral came to his full stop, mustered up a little courage. He would much sooner have faced a battery than have spoken to the admiral; but he felt he had a duty to perform, and thus he commenced his task.

"I have returned, Sir John, to ask your pardon for having, to a certain extent, omitted

to do a duty to others. I was so overjoyed at your notice of my conduct, that I forgot on that occasion I was not alone. The senior midshipman of the Zebra, who is forty-five years of age, (here Sir John started,) swam by my side, his cutlass in his mouth, and was the first on the rampart. I feel satisfied you will pardon me this intrusion, since it was my duty, as well as my greatest desire, to bring this long-neglected and deserving officer to your notice."

"I should have thought as badly of you, Captain Bowling, as before I thought highly, had you omitted this most essential branch of your duty; at the same time I beg to inform you, that when great services are performed, my eye is on every one. I inquired at the time who assisted you; and as I can see that you will be gratified in doing a kind act, take this commission. You will see it is already signed; and in your assistant in that gallant affair you will find your successor to the command of the Zebra. You have no time to lose; you will sail at daylight to-morrow, in company with the Zebra, for a few miles, and as you have much

to do, I shall not perhaps see you again." Sir John Jervis gave his hand, and as he warmly pressed it, said, "I shall not forget or lose sight of you."

With a light heart and cheerful countenance Bowling returned to the Zebra.

"Are we to weigh, Sir?" said the midshipman.

"No, Sir," said Bowling, rather sharply; "turn the hands up, and send everybody aft; we must set the business to rights directly."

And here he turned round, leaving his gallant successor in considerable uneasiness, as he imagined something had been done amiss for which he should incur some displeasure.

"The men are all aft, Sir," said the young gentleman.

"My men," said Bowling; "I am sorry to tell you that I am about to leave you; for a more gallant set of fellows never stepped a deck. And if I were to lead a party to storm the gates of Paris, I should like to have the volunteers from this craft. We have not been together two months, and in that time I have seen as

much of you as if we had served together for years. The admiral has removed me from this vessel, and I must change my ship to-night. As you have acted since I have been on board, so let me advise you to continue under my successor. He is a brave and gallant officer, and will never disgrace the crew of the Zebra. You will pay attention to this paper I am about to read, as I have no doubt it will give you all satisfaction to hear."

Bowling then stood upon a carronade slide, and read out the *young gentleman's* commission, making him a lieutenant, and appointing him to the Zebra; but as no name is mentioned on such a document, the ship's company and the gentleman himself were kept in the dark until the very end, when Bowling concluded thus:— "Signed, John Jervis, vice-admiral. To Mr. Robert Watson, midshipman of the Zebra, hereby promoted to the rank of lieutenant, and appointed to the command of his majesty's sloop, the Zebra; vice Bowling, promoted to the command of the Echo."

Never were three lustier cheers heard than

followed the announcement. The tears came into old Watson's eyes, and Bowling gave an audible sniffle; and it was on this occasion that Captain Bowling ventured upon a glass of grog to the success of his shipmate, who had so gallantly seconded him. As Bowling was now to wear an epaulette on the left shoulder, and was for the future to discontinue the blue coat edged with white, he made Lieutenant Watson a present of his garment. Watson was determined not to run the risk of bad luck by any deviation from old rules and customs. He ordered the pendant to be hauled down, and, coming on deck in his new uniform, desired it to be hoisted again as his pendant. Captain Bowling asked permission to give Watson a luncheon in the cabin of the latter, he being no longer the commander; and although it was only noon, and the sun scorching hot, a slight jollification took place. Bowling sent on shore for a small cask of *vin ordinaire*, which would, when shared out to the crew, give them some satisfaction, and in all probability act as a preservation against fever. There was nothing

likely to be done which could cause annoyance. Everything looked prosperous. One or two of the petty officers who had been foremost in the attack were made gunners and boatswains; and the only dejected countenance on board, and he was much too generous to damp the general enthusiasm, was that of the other midshipman, who, with heart as noble and courage as high, had been debarred the chance of promotion by being left in charge of the sloop when the rest swam on shore. However, he had got a step, for he was now chief mate.

"Now," says Watson, "all the drudgery of life is over. I have carried the pedlar's pack of a midshipman's life for twenty-five years, and I have been passed fifteen years. I always thought that every man who came into the Zebra would try to get rid of me, and leave me to starve on shore; for a midshipman's half-pay is not easily reckoned. Now I'll get married. I'll try to pick up a little prize money to fit out my bride, and then I cast anchor on shore never again to get under weigh."

"Well said, Watson," replied Bowling; "I

think there is not a man in the service who would begrudge us a slight jollification upon our advancements. We'll have our dinner together at six o'clock; I'll pay the piper. But I must go and take command of the Echo, and then shift my traps; after that, and all the work done,—for there may be lots to do yet,—I'll return here, and we'll spend the evening like men who have reason to rejoice, and like officers, who should set an example."

Captain Bowling was received on board the Echo with three cheers. His gallant conduct had long since been heralded through the fleet. His predecessor had died of the fever; and this comfortable shipmate had made himself very familiar with some more of the crew. Bowling saw at a glance that great care and good discipline were requisite. Before the Echo sailed, the water had to be completed, provisions were required, and the rigging must be set up. He became the captain directly he read his commission; and the officers saw in the gallant fellow who had swam on shore and scaled a fortress, a careful and an active seaman.

He was to sail with sealed orders, to be opened on the Equator, in the longitude of fifty; and one of the line-of-battle ships was ordered to supply his ship with provisions. Bowling felt that the oftener he changed his vessel the less remembrance there was of his former life. And in the Echo, just from England, not a soul had the slightest idea of his having served before the mast. This kind of news flies rapidly, and Bowling, to avoid its being spread from the Zebra, particularly desired that none of the men should be allowed to come on board, assigning for a reason his fear of the contagion of the yellow fever.

He visited his cabin; the difference was striking. Instead of having passed from old lieutenant to old lieutenant, each endeavouring to save a dollar, the cabin of the Echo had been fitted out by a young nobleman. There were provisions and wines of the choicest selection, with a respectable servant. A strict account had been taken of all these things. Bowling at once took everything that was left, and found himself just as comfortably situated as

the captain of the Creole, who had so very unexpectedly caused his promotion. It was at this thought that a flush of pride passed over his face.

"Another chance," said he, "and the Honourable Charles Curlew will be my junior officer, in spite of his high-flown birth, his ministerial interest, his carving fowls, and his judgment of wine. Once posted, then hurrah for Susan. But I will deserve her yet. I feel myself well in the saddle. Neither Nelson nor Collingwood will forget me; and Jervis has promised not to lose sight of me." Then he suddenly commenced—"Oh, Susan, Susan, lovely dear,"—one of the finest songs that ever was penned by a poet. "I must write to her," he added, as he placed his writing materials before him.

"Why I dare do it, I hardly know," he began; "but I do it even at the risk of your displeasure. I call you, dearest Susan;—ah! how often, how very often does the name murmur from my lips. This letter conveys to you news which I know will be acceptable. I am a captain. The poor boy, taken from the grave-

side of his reputed father by your honoured parent, fed, housed, educated, cleansed in mind and body, has risen to be a captain in the navy. Now, Susan, the winds may howl, the seas run mountains high, thousands of miles may separate us, but nothing but death shall stop my gratitude, and even then I will shew you, in my last hour, that of all the world you were the only woman I adored. My heart's too full to write; but my vanity makes me wish that you could see me with an epaulette on my shoulder, walking, with a full impression of the importance of my command, on the deck of the Echo. I dare say my old valued friend, the German doctor, will rejoice at my advancement, and I shall write to him shortly. I sail to-morrow; but where I cannot tell. Be assured, however, I will not lose an opportunity of praying you never to forget your faithful sailor, and of giving you every tidings of my prospects, my hopes, and my destination. God bless you, Susan! God bless you."

CHAPTER XIII.

IN WHICH IS SHEWN HOW DIFFICULT A TASK IT IS TO PERSUADE A PERSON TO DIE WITHOUT BEING MARRIED.

"DID I ever, dearest Rosa, thwart you in one of your wishes, when those wishes were tempered by prudence and discretion? And now, what do I ask of you but that which your own good sense must approve? I would not shock you by an appeal to your long sufferings; but let me entreat you to relinquish all thoughts of marriage, and turn your attention to that awful moment which, sooner or later, we must all meet."

"Why, my dearest mother, for ever talk of death? I know we cannot escape it; but why should I be pointed out as if death was in the chamber?" A fearful shudder passed over Susan, who was sitting at the foot of the sofa, whilst the mother sat by the side of the invalid, holding her hand. "I feel no pain; I cough but a little; and if when I endeavour to rise I feel giddy, it is only from my long sickness now leaving me. By December I shall be well; and Susan and myself will ride in the fresh air, and our cheeks will then look as ruddy as the rose."

"Will nothing, my dear child, wean you from the thoughts of this world? Must I shew you this arm, now so thin that the pulsation of the artery can be *seen?* Must I, in performance of the duty I owe to my God,—to you,—to myself, hold up the mirror before those bright eyes, and shew you the sunken cheek and the hectic flush of consumption?"

"Of what! my dear mother?" said the affrighted girl. "Of consumption? Oh, it cannot be. Where are the symptoms which mark that dreadful complaint? Not an hour

since, Augustus rallied me on the beauty of my complexion, and my certain return to health and strength. Where are the symptoms, Susan? You know I eat with the appetite of health."

"Alas! my child," said Mrs. Talbot, whose firmness of mind never deserted her, "alas! in the very questions you have put may your answers be found. It is useless now to attempt to ward off the danger. The worst is told. Let me turn your heart to other objects than marriage. You would at this last moment repay back all my acknowledged kindness and attention by allowing us to lift your mind to a more exalted kingdom than this world can give."

The solemn manner in which Mrs. Talbot expressed herself had a wonderful effect upon Rosa; and when, at the conclusion of the above remark, the mother overcame the woman, and she burst into tears, Susan could no longer restrain herself, and the invalid became fearfully agitated. For some time they remained in total silence, Mrs. Talbot resting with her eyes fixed on her daughter with an expression of the most acute grief.

"Your mind, dearest Rosa, has not been prepared for receiving the impressions your dangerous state requires, and it is from those who are accustomed to administer relief that you must seek and obtain the consolation you require. Your physician more than a month since hinted to you your situation, but so delicately that you seem to have misunderstood him. I have schooled myself to bear that calamity with which it has pleased God to threaten me. Now let me instil into your mind fortitude and resignation. I have solicited my old and valued friend, our clergyman, to attend upon you almost directly, and when he leaves you, that good, kind, constant girl, who has watched over you with sisterly affection, will pray with you that we may all look with pious cheerfulness upon the separation about to ensue."

It is difficult to describe the whirlwind which seemed to blow about the thoughts of the invalid. Although fearfully alive to her situation, since the hated word had been pronounced, she could not feel the danger others, and amongst those her own mother, had pronounced.

Her very eager desire for food seemed to buoy her up with hope; and in that very hope was marked the strongest symptom of her disease. Her confidence as to her recovery still lingered on her mind, and she could not but think the next spring would revive her. Then came the thought of her lover, now wisely excluded by the mother.

A circumstance similar, in many respects, happened but a very few years ago. A most beautiful girl, only eighteen years of age, was seized by this unrelenting malady. Gradually her strength was sapped away; the cough came on; the most weakening perspirations saturated her bed; the appetite grew voracious, and death approached. Within three days of her death, so strongly was the conviction on her mind, in spite of every communication to the contrary, that she would recover, that after her parent had knelt by her side and offered up her heartfelt prayer, the daughter, discrediting even her anguish, said, "Oh, do not despond; I feel quite confident that next spring I shall be as well as ever, and in your opera-box." She died within four and twenty hours of that speech.

There are a vast number of men who have steeled their minds to meet death without apprehension; and in the tumult of the battle, when cheered on by their comrades in the excitement of victory, those men have met him with unblanched cheek and unquivering lips. But when sickness weakens the mind; when each morning only too plainly heralds the destroyer; when the physician hints, and the clergyman is summoned; he must indeed have lived a life of conscious rectitude who can hear the prayer read for the sick and not feel some apprehension.

In the lingering of consumption, when the mind retains its powers, and the wretched victim cannot imagine itself on the verge of the grave, the scene becomes more trying than in those cases where hope has lingered into despondency, and the elasticity of the mind is so lost that death or life appear indifferent.

Rosa's hectic flush forsook her as the clergyman entered. The mother and Susan were on their knees; and for the first time some misgiving seems to have taken possession of the invalid, for she trembled like a leaf. In a low, but deep and steady voice the clergyman performed his

solemn duty, and then became the friend and the monitor. He had been prepared for this unwelcome task by Mrs. Talbot, who urged him to purge her daughter's mind from the worldly thoughts which still held it in possession. He fancied he had succeeded, but soon discovered his mistake when the poor creature, clinging still with woman's affection to the object of her heart, made the extraordinary request that she might be married before she died, urging as an argument, that from the age of fifteen she had cherished the thought of being her cousin's wife, and it was the gratification of a last worldly wish, innocent and requisite, as she had pledged herself to the union, and had strength enough to repeat her vows.

Quite in vain was every argument used as to the impropriety of such a request at such an awful moment. Her mind was bent upon it. It was her first, her last, her only request. The world and its pleasures might have ceased, but her constancy should never waver. Her lover was true to his word, the priest was already in the room, and every attempt to dissuade her had not the slightest effect.

Susan, although much shocked at her companion's determination, generously used her endeavours to forward her wish ; and after a long conversation with Mrs. Talbot in the presence of the clergyman, and after every point having undergone a thousand discussions, Mrs. Talbot gave an unwilling consent, with the concurrence of the divine. It was agreed upon that in a week the marriage should take place ; and even now, Mrs. Talbot, with the warmest affection for her daughter, and a solicitude which made her dread that every hour might rob her of her only child, seemed to say, "She will never live for that event."

Susan conveyed the result of the conference to her friend. She received the intelligence with a gleam of delight which seemed to re-animate her entirely. The treacherous flush was deeper on her cheek, and she spoke, although in the hoarse voice which ever accompanies the disease, in rapture. She desired, she urged Susan to write to her lover to call immediately, and flattered herself that he would receive the summons to this strange bidding with equal delight and affection.

Mrs. Talbot was a woman of very good pro-

perty, the whole of which was settled upon her daughter. If her daughter died without issue, or without being married, it became the mother's absolutely. This disposition, however, never gave that generous woman a thought. It was her property as long as she lived; and having been rather unfortunate in her marriage, she was resolved never to hazard her liberty again. Mrs. Talbot knew well enough, what some widows of our own time had done well to have remembered, that whenever a young man of prepossessing appearance, whose character has been stamped as void of principle, solicits the hand of a woman at least thirty years his superior, the marriage is thought of merely for the money; and that whilst the woman is using her utmost power to retain the most trivial affection, her wealth is squandered in unbridled licentiousness.

Sufficient for Mrs. Talbot was the solitude of Grove Hall, and sufficient was the excitement of watching over and attending her only child. But a handsome appearance in a man often overcomes the general suspicion of the sex: and

Mrs. Talbot, although sensible that Augustus Cornish was a little addicted to the long bow and to deep potations, overlooked in him the faults which in others would have assumed a criminal appearance. Besides, he was her nephew, though not the man for whom she had destined Grove Hall. For a moment the thought that her intentions would be thwarted by this marriage flashed across her, but she was much too liberal to allow it to have the slightest weight in opposition to the wishes of her dying daughter. Still nothing could overcome the shock her feelings sustained as she thought of the ceremony which appeared to her the union of life and death, health and disease; for her opinion of her nephew was such that she doubted he would consent to become a husband under such circumstances. Once she thought of a mock ceremony; but she never had deceived her daughter, and in perfect despair gave up all idea of hindering what she had promised.

To her very considerable astonishment, no objection was raised by her nephew. He candidly admitted having made a proposition, and

as candidly declared his intentions of fulfilling his engagement if his dearest aunt would sanction the union. He mentioned his bride's health as gradually improving; and, with a countenance which defied suspicion, spoke of days of happiness yet in store for them.

"Surely, surely, Augustus," said Mrs. Talbot, "you cannot pretend ignorance of her awful situation. I question if she can outlive the short period between this and that day I so much dread."

"She assures me she feels better. It is true, she is, I think, thinner, her voice is hoarse; but then her appetite is good, her eyes bright, and her cheek blooming with colour."

Mrs. Talbot eyed her nephew narrowly during this exhibition of medical knowledge; but he was proof against any assault of the eyes. He had turned over in his mind the chances, and he was resolved to get possession of the money by marriage, and be free of all expenses but those arising from "the undertaker's bill, or lapidary's scrawl." He knew just as well as the

doctor that a month was the utmost even the most sanguine could expect her to survive.

"I have long been attached to her," he continued, "and now my devotion is about to be rewarded, I shall shew by my conduct, by my attention and solicitude, how much she is, and ever has been, the object of my sincerest affection."

An idea of the intelligence of Captain Cornish's father may be gathered from the following conversation.

"Augustus," said he, tapping his son's curly head when a child, "do you see those tall trees?"

"Yes, papa," responded the boy.

"What trees are they, my son?"

"Poplars," answered the lad.

"Do you know what they are used for?"

That was a puzzler; and the youth answered with much hesitation, "No."

"I'll tell you, my child; and now take care not to forget it. They saw them up into pieces and make oak planks of them. And do you

know what they do with the oak planks, my child ?"

" No," answered the boy.

" They make mahogany bedposts of them, boy. There, remember all this, because this is what is called useful knowledge."

Augustus found out a more useful master, and became as cunning as a Russian diplomatist.

Mrs. Talbot in vain endeavoured to master her feelings, and left the room ; at which moment Susan entered. Her face was a little flushed, which heightened her charms ; and such was her elegance of figure and softness of expression that the most indifferent could not have passed her by unregarded.

Captain Cornish seemed to undergo some little sensation akin to surprise. Susan expressed her astonishment that Mrs. Talbot was not there ; and Augustus very civilly remarked he did not regret the absence of his mother-in-law and aunt, as it afforded him the pleasure of an interview with Miss Monckton. Susan, who was evidently thinking of something else than

flattering speeches, sat down near the window, and gave vent to a deep sigh.

"You sigh heavily," said the handsome captain, as he advanced towards her. "I wish it were in my power to lighten the load which seems to press upon your mind."

"And who, may I ask," continued Cornish, in a voice attuned to as much harmony as he had at his command, "is the fortunate man who thus occupies so much of that heart as to mar its repose?"

"At present," replied Susan, "you are the man who caused that sigh, and who so much, to use your own words, mars my repose."

"Indeed!" ejaculated Cornish.

"Yes, indeed, Captain Cornish; and strange, nay, rude as it may appear, I wish you so far from me that you could no longer occupy my thoughts."

"Would absence then, Miss Susan, blot me from your memory?"

"It would save me from an act I shall ever blush to acknowledge, and which nothing but absence can effect."

" I could easily absent myself, and be under no apprehension of a reprimand; but I would rather be near you, rather listen to your reproaches, rather hear my own name uttered with coldness by you, than be absent from you. Then," he added, in a Romeo look and tone, " all the gathering clouds around me seem to dissipate when I 'hear thee, see thee, gaze on all those charms!' "

" Sir!" said Susan, rising.

" It is only a quotation, Miss Susan," said Augustus, with consummate coolness. " Poets string words, like pearls, and they make the handsomest corollary. You speak of my absence; could I trust you with a secret?"

" I fear, Captain Cornish, I am not sufficiently your equal to be made the depository of your thoughts."

" I asked you, Miss Monckton, if I might entrust you with a secret?"

" I think it unfair, Captain Cornish, to entrust any one with a secret. You betray it by making me aware of it; and how, therefore,

could you rebuke me if I betrayed it to another?"

"You will oblige me much by receiving it, and promising not to betray it."

Curiosity overcame discretion; and Captain Cornish put a large official letter into her hand, and begged her to peruse it.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE MARRIAGE OF DEATH.

EVERYTHING was arranged for the marriage. Susan was to be bridesmaid. On this occasion a suitable dress was provided, and it afforded Mrs. Talbot some trifling satisfaction—the only drop of sweetness in the cup brimming with bitterness — in having the opportunity, without hurting the feelings of her daughter's companion, to present her with a very handsome necklace and earrings. Susan had received Bowling's letter, in which he gave her the cheerful intelligence of his promotion; and how far

the sailor's words had won her heart is best understood by the letter Bowling received, and which we have given before. In spite of the joy of her generous heart in the knowledge that the poor boy was now a lieutenant in the navy, and still acknowledged with gratitude her former kindness and protection; in spite also of the assurances of a mutual affection, and of everlasting constancy, (words readily received by those who are willing to believe them, but sadly discredited by maturer minds,) Susan was frequently seen in tears.

"Oh, that I dared betray this secret to Mrs. Talbot," she said; "and yet what good could result? He would swear to die by her side rather than leave her; whilst in his hand is the official order to join his regiment within ten days, in order to embark for the Cape of Good Hope. He would not relinquish the service, for he has vanity enough to sacrifice his cousin rather than lose his uniform and his cockade. Two days hence is the wedding; five days hence and Captain Cornish must be at Portsmouth. My poor friend would die if she knew

of this resolution, and she would die of the sudden disappointment if the match were broken off. I must leave it to the Disposer of all events, and ever regret my curiosity which forced me to receive the burthen of a secret."

Miss Talbot had made a will in which she left the money given her by her mother to her best friend, Miss Monckton; but Susan was ignorant of such a testament. She never thought of money whilst her mother had enough to maintain the most humble respectability; and her heart was too much occupied by Bowling and her friend to think of any provision when her friend should be no more.

The day arrived, and the poor, sick, emaciated being was dressed as a bride. She fainted twice during the exertion of the toilette; but at each revival she seemed more resolute to go through the ceremony, and after the administration of some restoratives she was declared ready. The clergyman was introduced, the doctor gave her away, and this poor victim of human weakness was married. She was elated with joy at the termination of the affair, and

seemed flushed with unusual rosyness when she heard herself addressed as Mrs. Cornish. The ceremony had been performed whilst she reclined on her sofa, for she was far too weak to stand during the period required; and the congratulations which the etiquette of society demanded were rather in accordance with custom than ebullitions of the heart.

Susan could not restrain her tears. The bride had strength enough to rally her on her own expectations of being an officer's wife, and claimed priority of rank. "Who, indeed," she said, playfully, "would marry a sailor?—people who are wandering over the ocean, the emblems of inconstancy,—rocked by the inconstant wind upon the inconstant wave! I pity you," continued the excited girl; "my husband—I have him now, Susan, tied fast to me for ever—will never leave me; and, in spite of the croaking of the doctor, I shall live to see many happy days with him."

Susan could not answer; her generous heart was too full; and she would not for worlds have damped the joy which illuminated the eyes of

her attenuated friend. She shook her warmly by the hand; but in spite of all endeavours she could not restrain her tears.

"Why, Susan, you make me jealous before I have been an hour a wife. Why should you weep because I am married? Ah, I begin to feel a little of the green-eyed monster, and am almost weak enough to place some credit in that story of my lost Abigail."

"You need not fear, my kind friend," said Susan, "any rival in me. No, no; it is not for myself I weep. Since I have been your companion everything has prospered, therefore I regret not my circumstances; neither do I feel disposed to worry myself about the inconstancy of sailors. Mr. Bowling left me a mere child. I was exactly his age, and I only wonder that he ever recollects my name. I cannot, however, mistake his meaning, nor would I for worlds, for he must have a noble heart. No, no, Rosa, I weep for you. The time is very short before disappointment must come, and how will my dear friend be prepared to receive it?"

"Oh, dear," replied Rosa, rather pettishly,

"do not croak like that disagreeable old doctor."

It was some time before the bridal dress could be exchanged; for the excitement being partially checked by Susan's tears, the reaction was in proportion. The young wife became pale, unusually weak, and perfectly helpless. At last, however, she was re-dressed, and appeared occasionally flushed into animation.

In the mean time the bridegroom, who considered the whole business as merely to gratify his cousin in a whim before she died, had not been idle in his speculations. There was a dirty attorney in the village, who enlightened his client upon one or two points, the most material of which was that a will made before marriage is invalid directly the woman becomes *une femme couverte;* and that whatever disposition she might have made, it could only govern the distribution in proportion as he felt inclined to honour her wishes. As to love, he could not have the slightest affection for the "bag of bones" he considered his wife; and had long since endeavoured, with anything but honour-

able views, to win the heart of Susan. His home was not far distant; and at the request made by Mrs. Talbot that he would allow her daughter to recover herself from the excitement, he very coolly betook himself to his father's billiard-table, and quite forgot, in the excitement of play, the constant girl who at death's door had married him. He, too, was well aware it was but a nominal marriage, and that his father's house would still remain his home. There was yet a task imposed on him, to which he did not feel equal: it was the divulging to his wife the order for his departure.

At this time it was resolved by the government to make a descent on the Cape of Good Hope, and to maintain it, in the event of success, as an English colony. It was of the greatest importance in regard to the India trade, and was considered as an easy conquest. Troops were embarked under the command of General Alured Clarke, and the officers of each regiment were fully aware, from the importance of the service, that any flinching or applying for exchange would be considered as wearing a white feather

— a disgrace unknown to the British army. The fleet of Indiamen were at Portsmouth, and the day was fixed for their departure. Men-of-war go to sea to look for a fair wind, and the gallant captains of the India fleet, who well won the lion on their buttons, never lingered in port when any service was required of them.

Cornish was no coward : he lied from vanity and want of principle. He was uneasy if any one was reported to do anything better than he could do it. The admirable Crighton was a fool to him, in his own estimation; and therefore Cornish lied immensely to maintain his ground. As an example of his ability in the Munchausen vein, he once declared he had taken a jack, with a line, that weighed ninety-four pounds— that he had lifted a butt of porter to his mouth, and drunk out of the bung-hole (he did *not* drink it all at a draught) ; and that he had walked, one morning in the shooting season, from Tottenham to Cambridge, where he intended to dine, through all the fields, carrying with him his game, which, as he never accidentally missed, amounted to about forty brace of birds. There

was not a woman in the county who had not fallen in love with him, nor any fox-hunter who ever could ride like him. He was believed, according to his own account, to have more influence than the lord-lieutenant, and was disgusted at the refusals he was obliged to give to the everlasting request, that he would represent different counties in parliament. However, he only imposed upon people as silly as himself. He did no particular harm to any one, and had, from the volubility of his words and the brilliancy of his imagination, acquired the name of Captain Pepper, — there being an anecdote concerning a certain Tom Pepper, who was so superior in the art as to be turned out of a place, which most men are particularly anxious to avoid.

In stating the case to his friend the attorney, he declared that the enterprise at the Cape would, to a certainty, fail if he did not lend his aid, and therefore it was imperative on him to go, although he was aware that his bride would ill receive the intelligence; and he prayed the attorney to invent some story likely to be cre-

dited—thus paying the attorney a professional compliment, and acknowledging how much he was himself discredited. The attorney seemed to think, for once in his life, that the truth was preferable to any concealment; and after recommending his client instantly to prepare a will, which he was quite ready to draw up to the prejudice of anybody, advised Captain Augustus Cornish to return to Mrs. Talbot, and shew her the letter. "Anything you think proper to add as to your military reputation, the probable failure of the expedition in the event of your counsels being withdrawn, or the sudden dismay of the troops, should they be deprived of your guidance, may be poured into the ears in proportion as there is an avidity to listen; but I need not advise one so qualified to judge of the fair sex—one whose conquests in the fields of love are as numerous as those of Marlborough in the fields of war."

"You overcome me—positively—damme!—Good morning."

"There goes," said the attorney, as he looked out of his window, "about as shallow a pated

coxcomb as ever it fell to my lot to be acquainted with, and the veriest murderer of truth that ever escaped the execution of public opinion."

"A shrewd, sharp-sighted, clever man that attorney," said Augustus to himself; "he is aware of my power, and of my courage. He recommends a will, because he knows I cannot restrain myself in the presence of an enemy; and his allusion to Marlborough was a compliment to myself."

Great was the surprise of Mrs. Talbot when the letter was placed in her hands, and she was made aware that Cornish had received it some days before the marriage. That letter might have saved her the criminal act to which she imagined she had been accessary. To rebuke her son-in-law with duplicity was useless; the marriage was celebrated; and how now to turn the letter to the best advantage occupied her active mind.

"Only two days more!" she said; "that is indeed sudden."

"And the difficulties," said Augustus, "are

insurmountable. Had I been on half-pay I could have avoided so hasty an order, because I could easily have been absent when the letter arrived; but my being on leave, and having named my father's house as the place where any despatch could reach me, renders that evasion impossible. I have no time to exchange—to sell out—or get sick; if I do not join I shall be subject to a court-martial—dismissed the service in disgrace,—scouted as a coward—degraded as a man. If I go, I leave behind me the dearest object of my life in a precarious state of health; and how long it may be before I return who can possibly tell?"

"It is a difficult case," said Mrs. Talbot, whose expression of countenance, had Cornish been an observant man, was evident of her having read the secret wishes of his heart; and these were in accordance with her own, for she wished him far away, so that the very whisperings of the marriage might not be trumpeted throughout the county. She bade the captain go and watch over his bride; and, ringing her bell, desired Miss Monckton might attend her.

"Again, Susan," she said, as Miss Monckton obeyed the call, "again I must solicit your kindness in our behalf. Read that letter."

Susan instantly recognised the same letter that Cornish had placed in her hand. She hesitated one moment, in which the quickness of woman's thoughts flashed across her,—"She might know I have seen it, and this is to try me," overcame all others, and indicated honesty as the best policy. "I have read it before," she said.

"When?" asked Mrs. Talbot, with some quickness.

"Before the marriage," replied Susan.

"And you kept it a secret from me! This letter, Susan, would have saved us the painful ceremony we have witnessed, by faithfully promising that on his return the marriage should take place."

"I foolishly consented to secresy, Mrs. Talbot; and my honour was pledged before I read the contents."

"Young ladies," replied Mrs. Talbot, with

some degree of sarcasm, "would do well not to pledge their honour at all."

Susan burst into tears; it was the first unkind word she had ever received to make her feel her dependency; and in the expression she read a doubt as to the truth of Waller's assertions.

"Dry those tears, child," said Mrs. Talbot, recovering her serenity; "none but fools mourn over events they cannot remedy. I am well aware why my nephew consented to this union, and why he seeks now to abandon his wife. There is some truth in what he has said,—his name will be tarnished if he refuses to go; this point must be urged strongly on Rosa. A woman who does not feel every imputation cast on her husband as hurled against herself, neither deserves to share his honours, nor preserve his affections. We must make this the grand point: the honour she will acquire by the preservation of his honour;—the disgrace she will share if he is branded as a coward. Go, Susan, you must break this subject carefully. I will come to your aid when it is most

required; it is better one should follow the other, than that both should appear together. Send my son-in-law"—(she said this in rather a sharp manner)—" to me directly."

It was a harsh, ungenerous task to be forced to open a subject so painful to the invalid; but ably was it done. Susan spoke carelessly of the news of the day,—the great and important service about to be performed, the high character of the general, and the rush of officers as volunteers; how each father urged his best interest to get his son a partaker in the glorious enterprise; and how each soldier cursed the lazy hours which seemed to linger through the days.

" And Augustus," said Rosa, brightening up; " does he not wish to be there?"

" Indeed he does; but then he could not leave you."

" I would not have him here to share my sickness; I would rather he shared the enterprize, and came home to me covered with honour. Let me speak to him, I will overcome his scruples. I shall not be the first bride who has separated with her husband at the church-

door. A captain went to India for three years, and his beautiful bride returned to her parents to linger out that time in watching his fortune, and in sharing his distress. I shall live to see him return; and I can manage to endure the parting."

CHAPTER XV.

IN WHICH THE AUTHOR FLATTERS HIMSELF ARE TWO VERY PRETTY SONGS, AND EXPECTS SOME PROFESSOR WILL SET THEM TO MUSIC.

"A GLORIOUS jollification, Watson!—success to the service!—I'll sail with you to-morrow morning for a doubloon! and I'd sing you a song to-night if I did not think it unbecoming a captain to tune up his pipes to the disturbance of others!"

"Never mind that," said Watson. "I'll give you leave to chant as loud as the chimes of a cathedral clock; only take care old Jarvis does not hear you."

"He would not mind a man's wetting his commission, and we will proceed to this duty first; hand over yours." Bowling took the order, and, bending it up into a cocked-hat shape, filled it full of pretty strong brandy and water; and before it had time to leak through, he drank to Watson's "Success in the navy; his success on shore; prize-money now, and Greenwich Hospital in old age!"

"Now hand us yours, Captain Bowling, and I'll do as much for you, if good wishes can avail. Here's all the luck the world can give, and all the pleasures life can enjoy! Success to you, Captain Bowling!"

"Bear a hand, my dear fellow," said Bowling, interrupting him, "the grog is leaking through, and all my luck will ooze away."

"There," said Watson, reversing the cocked hat, "there's not enough left to tempt a Jamaica fly, and I took it as strong as my heart's desire. It was neat as imported, and although I have swallowed enough in my time to float the brig, yet I never drank a drop with half the pleasure I have drank this. Come, tune up your pipes, it's only half-past eight."

"I ordered my gig at nine," said Bowling.

"You could have had mine," said Watson, rubbing his hands at the very idea of *his* gig, *his* ship. He was fairly turning round in the whirlpool of intoxication occasioned by joy, not by rum, and could not fancy himself the character he had a right to assume. "Shoot a-head! Captain Bowling, and save the tide."

"When the breeze swells the canvas, the anchor's a-trip,
And the ensign's hauled down from the peak of the ship;*
When the land is receding, and fresh is the breeze
That bears us away on the breast of the seas;
Hope swells my fond bosom, and this is my strain,—
'Believe me, dear Susan, I'll come back again.'

"When the decks are all clear, and the foe is in sight,
And the ensign waves proudly to challenge the fight;
When the smoke of the broadside is curling around,
And the cheers grow the louder, the louder's the sound;
Hope swells my proud bosom, and this is my strain,—
'Believe me, dear Susan, I'll come back again.'

"When the enemy's struck, and her colours are down,
And the cross of St. George o'er the French flag is shewn;

* Hauling down the ensign when a ship goes out of a port is as much as to say, "Good-bye."

When we've mourned for the dead who have fallen that day,
And our hearts are with those who are then far away ;
Hope swells my fond bosom, and this is my strain,—
' Believe me, dear Susan, I'll come back again.'

" When the winds and the waves are in tumult and strife,
And the fever stalks forth as the foe to man's life;
Though distant in climes of the snow or the sun,
Ere the battle is fought, or the battle is won ;
I think of the girl who enlivens the strain,—
For believe me, dear Susan, I'll come back again."

" Bravo!" said Watson, " bravo! Here's a health to pretty Susan, for pretty she must be, and success to her lover who wrote the song. Lord! what is a sailor without a Susan? I wonder if this was black-eyed Susan."

Bowling smiled as he said, " I fancy this Susan is at any rate as handsome as ever black-eyed Susan might have been."

" Well, it's very odd, Captain Bowling," said Watson, after a moment's reflection, " that sailors always fall in love. Now I'm not at all particular in that respect. I don't care one straw if the girl's black, brown, or fair—if she's a nose as flat as a flounder, or if it's arched in the

middle, like a bridge—if her hair is as fine as the hemp in a Spanish yarn, or as stiff and as curly as a door-mat—as long as she's young. I'm in love with youth; that's always fresh and rosy. I never could fall in love with anything like parchment, except in the shape of a commission. No, no! hurrah, I say, for the wind that blows —the ship that goes—and the *lass* that loves a sailor!"

"Why, Watson, the parchment has made you young again, or the grog has warmed up your heart to fever heat. Can you sing?"

"Can't I, that's all! If I never sang before, I could sing now; and if old Jervis only knew how light he has made one poor fellow, he would not mind my being a little excited this evening."

"Why, you deserved it. There's not a braver fellow ever stood between the stem and the stern of the ship than Thomas Watson. I think I see you now with the cutlass in your mouth, the shot falling around you like hail, so close that they splashed the water in your face whilst your eye was fixed on the port, which never winked to the whiz of the balls. You deserved what

you got, and Jervis never yet let a brave fellow linger out his life without promotion. You led the way—I only followed."

"But you were overboard first, and set the example; I only followed *that*. Blow high, blow low," said Watson, "let me only have you for a guide, and I'll follow you, if it's to draw the black gentleman out of his lodgings, as a terrier does a badger."

"We shall meet again, my old friend," said Bowling, "and now for your song."

"Here goes—excuse the voice, it's husky with joy; and as for the music, I never liked that since I first heard a hand-organ and a hurdy-gurdy. Suit the word to the action and the action to the word, as the auctioneer said when he knocked down a bidder:—

"Pass the grog, pass the grog!
Your sailor is a jolly dog,
Ever laughing, ever gay,—
Sings at night and works by day,
Cares no more for wounds or wealth
Than doctors for their patients' health.

"Fill the bowl, fill the bowl!
Be to-night a jovial soul.

Here's to her who loves a tar;
Here's to love, and here's to war;
Here's to youth's dark flashing eyes;
Here's war, which brings us many a prize.

"Fill the glass, fill the glass!
Every sailor loves a lass;
Mine's the maiden fresh and fair,
Clear blue eyes and auburn hair;
If dark or hazel, brown or green,
If she's young, she's beauty's queen."

"Well sung, Watson; it does my heart good to see you so happy, and I wish you a wife as young and as green as you can desire."

"Captain Bowling," said the midshipman, "your gig is alongside."

"Tell them to remain in the boat," said Bowling, who instantly thought of the secret he wished respected—a secret which almost all men are inclined to keep, although it is more to their honour than any advancement through interest; yet the expression, so frequently used as a kind of reproach, "Oh, he rose from before the mast," thereby implying the man could not have been born a gentleman, outweighs all

consideration of personal service and merited reward.

"Good night," said Bowling, "good night, Watson. We shall weigh to-morrow at day-light —here comes the flag-ship's boat—then for our doubloon bet; and if, old boy, I ever get another chance with you at a fort, I will see if I cannot be first. Success to you, wherever you go; and see, I drain my glass to the toast."

Captain Bowling was now on deck. To his astonishment he found the whole crew of the brig upon deck also. Every man had his hat off, and every one seemed to outvie the other in the determination of being heard. "God bless you, sir!"—"God bless you, Captain Bowling!" "We'll all volunteer for your ship, sir."—"May you live for ever, your honour!"—"Wull, I hope you'll be happy, sur."—"Success to you below, sir, and a comfortable berth aloft afterwards, any how!"

"Thank you, my lads, thank you!" said Bowling, warmly. "Every happiness attend you, and lots of prize-money to make the fiddles play at Portsmouth Hard! Where's the ship's corporal?"

"Here, your honour!" said a smart-looking Irishman.

"Take this for the ship's company, and when you get to Barbadoes ask the captain in my name to let you have some liberty-liquor to remember your old commander. And now good night to you, my lads."

The Echo's gig's crew had their oars up; the boat shoved off; and no sooner was the bow-oar lifted up, before it fell in the water, than Bowling heard, "Now then, my lads!" and three such cheers followed, such hearty cheers, that the vice-admiral started in his cabin. "I like to hear that!" said Jervis to Captain Grey; "it's a proof that young man was as good as he was brave." The gig's crew returned the cheer, before the echo had ceased to respond from hill to hill. It was a beautiful, clear, calm silent night, and that cheer was long remembered by Bowling.

It is very difficult to describe the first sensations produced by a command. At once to be free from all control; to be the absolute monarch of an obedient people; to be approached

with respect; to hear no murmur of discontent, or in contradiction to your authority; to have the power of inflicting punishment or rewarding services; to have the responsibility, the heavy responsibility, of life or death (for on many occasions the order of the captain saves the one, or courts the other); must produce very powerful sensations.

It was with a certain degree of modesty that Captain Bowling received a large packet which the officer of the watch had received from the Admiral's ship; which Bowling immediately took below, after wishing the officer good night.

He found not the tallow candles of a lieutenant's command, but wax candles in silver candlesticks, the steward waiting for orders, and altogether a degree of comfort he never had before experienced in his life. It reminded him of Captain Collingwood's cabin on a smaller scale. The Echo was fresh from England, and Bowling had escaped another plague, the worst of all inflictions in tropical climates: there were no cockroaches whizzing about the lights; no centipedes crawled along the beams; no

scorpions concealed in the lockers; musquitoes never come that distance from the shore, and the large black ant had not yet paid a visit to the Echo.

Bowling opened the packet. The first was his order to sail at daylight, and make the best of his way to the Equator, in longitude 40°, there to open the sealed orders. A letter, written by the Admiral, addressed to Captain Bowling, was next placed and opened on the table; he rang his bell, and desired the first-lieutenant might be sent to him.

"We must be underweigh," he said to that officer, "five minutes before daylight; and be careful to be rather sooner than later. Is there anything to be done before we sail?"

"The purser has some papers for you to sign, sir, which must be returned to the ships to-night."

"Very good; if you have no other boat down, use my gig. Send the purser to me." The papers were signed; orders were left to call the captain at four o'clock; the wine and water was removed untasted from his table; and Bow-

ling, with no small anxiety, opened the Admiral's letter.

It was one of those letters which are most beneficial to a young officer. It was highly complimentary to his courage. It recommended to Bowling the necessity of always well weighing the worth of a prize before he hazarded its capture; it recalled to his good sense the foolish sacrifices often made by young captains to gain their own promotion by an enormous expenditure of life; and called to Bowling's recollection the fearful responsibility which rested upon every officer who uselessly sacrificed a human being. "Our country," it said in one part, "requires an occasional dash to awe an enemy, and many lives are sometimes saved by this show of vigilance, bravery, and power, as one severe example in punishments often is the means of rendering such an occurrence unnecessary afterwards; but never hazard the life of a man but under the sternest emergency; and never have recourse to punishment but when an example is absolutely necessary." The letter concluded with the earnest

wish for Bowling's health and advancement, and a desire that the Admiral might occasionally receive an account of his proceedings.

There was no happier man alive than Bowling: he could not sleep; he wished to go on board to thank the Admiral in person; he thought of writing to him the warmest expressions of his gratitude; he was afraid to fall asleep, lest he should slumber past four o'clock; and in this excitement, occasionally humming Watson's song—"Here's to her who loves a tar — here's to love, and here's to war,"—he turned and tumbled about in his cot, mixing up in the jumble of his half dream and half wakefulness, the Admiral's letter with the last line of each verse of his own song, until he heard seven bells strike, when out he jumped, and called for a light.

"How many bells struck?" he said to the sentinel, who came head-foremost into his cabin with the lantern.

"Seven bells in the *first* watch, sir," answered the man.

"Oh, never mind the light, then," and he

turned in again, making a most sensible resolution not to be so very over-zealous; but although he had four hours to sleep, he could not bear to close his eyes for fear something might be remiss in the morning, and the vigilant Admiral remark that he had been deceived in his *protegé*.

Very different was it with old Watson. All the fire of youth had been pretty well taken out of him long before; and the recent attempt at wetting his commission made him feel less inclined for activity than usual. He read his orders; and, going on deck, gave directions to be called at daylight; and that the brig was to weigh and keep company with the Echo. He intended, it was quite evident, to take a captain's privilege, and let others work whilst he slept.

As the first streak of day appeared, the Echo was underweigh; her sails trimmed; every stick set in a real man-of-war style; and she was creeping to the eastward under the influence of a light land-air, which, as she opened the point, soon changed into the sea-breeze; but the Zebra was still at anchor. Bowling in-

wardly cursed the last night's jollification, which thus made Watson slow to obey the orders of his Admiral; and whilst he was surveying his late command through the glass, and observing that something was at last stirring, a gun from the Boyne—the daylight gun—was fired: he turned to look at her; he saw the Admiral paying him the same compliment; whilst at that moment the signal went up for the Zebra "to weigh directly." Bowling, suspecting that some signal might be made to him, kept a man ready at the signal halyards; he saw some flags going aloft, which, before they reached the mast-head, he was satisfied were his pendants. The answering pendant was run up to the truck unbroken; and as soon as the flag was broken, the signal was answered. It was, "Your zeal I have noticed." The signal for the Zebra to weigh was again repeated with a gun; and Watson found his doubloon and his credit fast going from him.

"There," said the Admiral, pointing to the Echo, "that man will be a credit to me, and to the service; he was a little *before* his time.

That one," he continued, pointing to the Zebra, " is just fit to go on shore and get married; he has outlived all the desire of an officer to be first in the field—his promotion has already ruined him; and he had better sleep with his wife, than slumber in his cot."

CHAPTER XVI.

IN WHICH IS SHEWN THAT A FOREMAST MAN NEVER IS SO GOOD A JUDGE OF SAFETY AS A CAPTAIN.

After considerable delay, in spite even of Watson's appearance on deck, the Zebra was got underweigh; and by noon both vessels were out of sight of the Admiral. Bowling's orders were to use his utmost endeavours to gain as quickly as possible the longitude in the Equator, where his sealed orders were to be opened; he could not, therefore, heave-to to communicate once more with his old shipmate, and infuse some of his own spirit for the service

in Watson. He therefore telegraphed to him a compliment on the powder the Admiral had expended, and wished him good-bye. He then hoisted his ensign and hauled it down again, which means, that the ships may part company.

The Echo was in good order; and Bowling soon made her a match for any vessel in the rapidity of her manœuvres. He carried a great press of sail; and on his arrival at the appointed place, he broke the seal of his despatches on the quarter-deck; and the same was duly inserted in the log. He now found himself ordered to the Cape of Good Hope, with particular injunctions not to communicate with any vessels outward-bound, and, as far as it was possible, to keep his destination a secret.

At dinner, on that everlastingly hot day—for, in spite of the awnings and continually wetting the decks, the pitch of the seams bubbled up, and nature seemed almost exhausted from the heat—the first-lieutenant gave a very intelligible hint of his desire to know their destination; and Bowling, with considerable address, evaded the question. But in the course of con-

versation the captain asked the doctor if, amongst his other works, he had any books of travels in the East Indies?

The doctor replied that he had none; but that he had some interesting accounts of the Dutch settlement at the Cape.

"The devil you have!" said Bowling. "Do me the favour to allow me to see them."

In the evening, when the officers resorted on deck, to inhale enough cool air to get their lungs at proper heat, Bowling was below, pondering over the book the doctor had lent. He was seen consulting charts, making sketches, and taking notes.

"We are bound to Madras," said the first-lieutenant.

"To the Cape, for any sum," interrupted the doctor. "If we were bound to India, the captain would have time enough to glean all the knowledge in that book before our arrival. He is getting up the history of the Cape to astonish the Dutch Governor on our arrival: there's something in the wind, you may rely upon it."

"I wish," said the second-lieutenant, who was a wit, "that it was a little freshness; for

even now it's more like the breath of an oven than a Christian's atmosphere ;—if we don't get out of these dolderums in a week, my skeleton will be keeping watch over my clothes. I wonder where we are bound to !"

"We are all wondering about that," said his messmate ; "and I think it odd, as we cannot tell the secret to any but the sharks, that the captain keeps it all to himself."

"Bless you, the flying fish would whisper it to the dolphin when they pass down their gullets, and it would soon be known over the ocean. For my part, I don't care one straw where we go to, as long as we go out of this broiling, baking heat. I don't wonder at everyone being crusty in such weather."

"The men, sir, want to know if you will give them permission to bathe ?"

"I'll ask the captain," replied the first-lieutenant to the midshipman.

Orders were immediately given to get a large lower-studding sail overboard, in which permission was given for the men to bathe ; but a command accompanied it that no man should venture outside of the sail, on any account

There always are some men in every ship who disregard all caution; and the Echo had her share of these fool-hardy fellows, who never consider why an order is given, but think it rather unnecessary or tyrannical, and out of pure contradiction oppose it.

The sail was soon pretty well filled with bathers, grateful for the opportunity of getting cool, or comparatively cool, in that lukewarm sea. Some were amusing themselves splashing their neighbours; here one boy, who could swim, was ducking his messmate, whilst the poor urchin took in vast quantities of salt water, to the infinite amusement of others, who laughed at his wry faces. There was noise enough alongside to have rivalled the largest school at a break-up at holiday-times.

Whilst the officers were amusing themselves in looking at the fun, or lounging over the taffrail, some of the men were availing themselves of the absence of the official eye to jump overboard from the cathead, or fore-chains, diving down head-foremost, and coming up close to the rim of the sail, in which were the

bathers. By degrees they increased their distance, and one, more venturous than the rest, dropped from the spritsail yard-arm.

It is well known that as tyrants are the greatest cowards, so the most ferocious animals are the most timid. A tiger would skulk away at the noise that a bull-dog would have the curiosity to inquire into. An alligator will sneak from the brake, and endeavour to creep silently into the water, to avoid the cry a child would make, if it scratched its face with a briar. Sharks generally shun the surf; and a stone thrown in the water will scare a thousand. These are generally well-ascertained facts; but there are exceptions to them all. The hungry tiger will seize a bullock — the half-famished alligator has been known to attack a boat, and in spite of the courageous resistance of the crew, to have seized one and carried him away. Sharks have been known to have dashed at a soldier washing his legs at Port Royal Point, and to have bitten them off; nay, they have followed ships in action, undismayed by the noise of the guns, or the fall of

the shot; and so susceptible are they of sound, that they have been known to follow music. The Equator is the habitation of these ferocious and appalling monsters. They are larger perhaps in the vicinity of Bermuda than almost any other part; whilst the tiger-shark of the West Indies has gained its unenviable appellation from its cunning, its resolution, and its ferocity. Sharks have been seen which have bitten at a bait, been hooked, and held, until harpoons had been driven into them, then to have shaken themselves off the hook and returned directly to snatch at a fresh bait. It is hard to cope with such determination and courage.

The man who had dropped from the spritsail-yard-arm was soon to be outdone by another, who, running out to the jib-boom end, dropped overboard, and on coming to the surface floated a little to regain his breath; he then struck out leisurely for the sail. He was a fine handsome fellow, one who was a stranger to fear, and who had often dared death. He was under the dolphin-striker when a midshipman observed

the fin of a shark; the fish was evidently going fast across the bows. The alarm was instantly given, and although the sail was a sufficient defence, every one used his utmost endeavour to regain the vessel.

The cry of "A shark! a shark!" reached the ears of the seaman, who struck out quicker to gain the sail. The officers rushed to the side, and a boat which had been lowered, and in which were two youngsters, was immediately hailed and desired to splash their oars and make as much noise as possible. The man gained the edge of the sail when the shark was seen under him. A simultaneous burst of horror came from the assembled crowd. The poor fellow felt that he was the object of commiseration, although within an inch of safety; and before he could lift himself into the sail—which, from the men having left it, was now higher than before—the white belly of the infernal creature was seen, and in a second the water was coloured with blood. The man let go his hold, and his mutilated body presented itself as a resistless object to its infuriated enemy. The

blood had been tasted; before the boat could near the horrible scene, the monster rose again, and the poor fellow was taken away, and sank to rise no more.

It is impossible to paint the dismay of that ship's company at witnessing the horrible catastrophe, and no one felt it more keenly than Bowling, for, as the poet who afterwards did credit to his memory remarks, "His heart was kind and soft." The eyes of the men seemed to endeavour to penetrate the ocean, which was rendered obscure from the blood of their shipmate; and it was deemed advisable instantly to withdraw their attention by the calling of all hands to muster.

It was well known who was the unfortunate sufferer thus taken from them; but Bowling thought this time the best, whilst the scene was fresh before their eyes, to make a proper impression upon his men. The mutilated corpse had sunk, and other sharks had been seen, attracted no doubt by their pilot fish, who readily scent blood, and lead their protectors to their food.

"We have been but a very short time to-

gether," said Bowling to his men, "and one life has been sacrificed by the disobedience of my orders. It is an example to which I refer with horror. I gave positive directions that no man should go out of the sail. I foresaw that an accident might occur, and I guarded against it. My orders have been disobeyed, and you see the fearful consequences which have ensued. Where is the boatswain?" Mr. Lanyard stept forward.

"Did you see that poor fellow drop from the jib-boom end?"

"No, sir; I was in my cabin."

The same question was put to the gunner, to the captain of the forecastle; but although many had seen it, not one avowed it. Captain Bowling then adverted to the impossibility of a man's running out to the jib-boom end when the foresail was hauled up without being seen, and again warning his men that he would have the most implicit obedience to his orders, sent them below to talk over a scene which a sailor never forgets.

Captain Bowling had endeavoured as much

as possible to imitate the behaviour of Captain Collingwood, and upon this occasion he put one of his maxims in force. Whenever Collingwood had found it requisite to find fault with an officer, he invariably did it the first time in a kind but firm manner. He never sent for that officer on the quarter-deck, and by any hasty word lowered him in his own estimation, and also in that of his inferiors; but he shewed the error in its proper colour, and warned the officer of the impropriety of its consequences. Bowling, when the hands were piped down, walked to the taffrail. The first-lieutenant, if on deck, always walks by the captain's side. Bowling, in the most gentlemanly manner, rebuked his officer in such a low voice that it was not overheard. He told him he should have placed midshipmen to see his orders were not disobeyed, and should himself have seen those midshipmen attended to their duty; that even from the quarter-deck this ought to have been observed, and that whilst he regretted the unpleasant duty of thus finding fault with his first-lieutenant, he felt the greater necessity from the

horrible accident which had occurred of imploring him to be more circumspect in future.

There are some men in the navy who would do well if they followed this example. There is nothing so degrading to an officer of rank as an intemperate reprimand before his inferiors. If he be respectful as he would have others respect him, his conduct is said to have merited the rebuke from his not having defended it. If both parties lose their temper, a court-martial generally follows, and neither party gains by the result. A rebuke, to be effective, and not to sacrifice either party, must be done in calmness and in privacy; if such unhappily is ineffective, the sooner the inferior withdraws from the superior the better. The first requisite in a commanding-officer is, as Bonaparte observed, "health;" the second, "temper." Without the first, the second is seldom found; and without the second, a good officer, mingling the gentleman with the commander, cannot exist. "Keep your temper" ought to be written on one side of the chronometer, and on the other, "Wind me up on Saturday."

There are some men in the navy who, in the intemperance of passion, (with just reason enough left to know that they will escape kicking under the garb of their rank,) have threatened to flog their first-lieutenant; and there are first-lieutenants who, cringing and lick-spittling to such a tyrant, have submissively bowed the neck, and walked away like frightened curs. For the honour of the navy be it said, this is only found where the victim of abuse is some poor fellow who has tumbled from the clouds, and whose parents are as unknown as the creature is insignificant. To make a good officer a man must be a gentleman; they are inseparable. The man who cannot command his tongue and his temper is the worst man to entrust with any command. The supercilious and the arrogant always meet from men endowed with common sense the contempt such childish frivolity deserves. Well might Shakspeare say, "That foolish man, dressed in a little brief authority, plays such fantastic tricks before high heaven," &c. Captain Bowling's conduct had the effect upon the first-lieutenant the former anticipated;

he became sensible of its delicacy, and practised towards his inferiors the same kindness and forbearance.

The Echo at last got out of those dolderums, the curse of all voyagers. There nature sinks under the overwhelming power of the sun; a general lassitude prevails; the ocean seems weary of motion, and calmly sleeps, her broad expanse idly reflecting the heaven above her, from which it receives its intensity of blue. There the turtle dozes almost in security, the shark's large fin seems too idle to mark the progress of the fish, the sea is not even disturbed by a breath of air, and in its large mirror everything seems placid and motionless. At last the current having swept her to the southward, a light breeze aloft caught the sails; once more a gentle air disturbed the face of the waters; the sea rippled at the bows, and, escaping from that week's enthralment, the Echo got into the sea-breeze, the trade wind, and crowded her canvas towards her destination.

It was early in the month of August, 1795, that the Echo made the Cape of Good Hope.

No sooner had she discovered the land than a squadron of ships were seen standing in towards Simon's Bay. A vessel, apparently about the size of the Echo, tacked on perceiving the Echo, and stood towards her; signals were exchanged. The stranger was the Rattlesnake; and both vessels followed the squadron, which was led by the Monarch, bearing the flag of Sir George Elphinstone, into Simon's Bay. His force consisted of four line-of-battle ships and the two brigs; and they had on board a detachment of the 78th Regiment, under the command of Major-General Craig. The despatches of the Echo seemed to occupy the attention of the Admiral. Everything now breathed of war; preparations were made for some active service, and a general animation prevailed.

The Cape of Good Hope was at this time under the command of the Dutch governor, General Sluysken; and as it was deemed advisable that such an important place should not fall by any negociation or attack into the hands of the French government, it was modestly proposed to the General that the settlement should

be placed under the *protection* of the British flag. There was no misunderstanding the meaning of the message; it was a gentle command to surrender the place, and the imposing force which had come to make the *request* was a sufficient indication of the intentions of the Admiral. Calling things by their proper names, or putting the message into language so plain that no blockhead could misunderstand it, it amounted to this: "Dear General,—If you will place the Cape under the protection of his Britannic Majesty, I shall not *take* it from you; but if you do not, I shall." The blood of the old Dutchman got to fever heat, without the use of his pipe. He sent back a positive refusal in the fewest possible words; and at once shook off the lethargy which occasionally attends his countrymen. He gave orders to the inhabitants of Simon's Town to depart, and mentioned his determination of setting fire to the town.

CHAPTER XVII.

IN WHICH THE CAPE BECAME IN REALITY A CAPE OF GOOD HOPE TO OUR HERO.

The determination of General Sluyskin (Slyskin, as the sailors called him,) was not long a secret; and it became necessary for the Admiral to prevent a calamity which was not only ungenerous towards the proprietors, but of considerable importance to the English. The Dutch were not quite so active in obeying the orders as the Governor had been in issuing them. They lingered at their thresholds—the furniture was lazily lumbered into the heavy

carts—and before one quarter could be removed, four hundred and fifty men of the 78th Regiment, and three hundred and fifty of those gallant fellows, the Marines, were hastily landed; and making one rush at the town, they took possession of it without any resistance.

The Dutch possessed a post of great importance in the pass of Muyzenburg, which is about six miles from Cape Town. It is overlooked by heights that were soon occupied by the Dutch militia, and the Hottentots.

The British force was altogether too insignificant to oppose those numerous troops, and still more so to attack their positions; but resolution is equal to numbers, as velocity is equal to weight. From these heights the Dutch amused themselves by firing on the English patrolles; and any person reconnoitring the position afforded capital practice for the "Make ready—present—fire and load,"—part of the Dutch exercise. The fire was never returned—the object was to take the Cape under our protection, as civilly set forth in the message;—not to murder the innocent subjects of the

Dutch monarch: but this everlasting firing grew a great deal too noisy to be allowed long to continue. A few days were lost in the hope of the arrival of the fleet from England; and the tidings of this expedition, and its probable sailing, constituted the important despatches which had been entrusted to Bowling. Now, however, hope deferred only made the heart sick. A new joy soon sprang up when the orders came to each ship to muster a certain number of small-arm men, to be under the command of Captain Bowling, of the Echo, and Captain Spranger, of the Rattlesnake. The amount of seamen selected for this service were about one thousand; and the whole force united, the 78th Regiment, the Marines, and the seamen, numbered one thousand eighteen hundred men. These men were landed without any opposition, and were assisted in their attacks by the boats of the squadron, armed with carronades.

On the morning of the 17th, the general advance began; and great was the trouble experienced by Bowling in keeping his amphibious army in their proper position. Jack has

no idea of the necessity of keeping step, or keeping in line—a flight of wild ducks are much more obedient than a division of small-armed men, sent to co-operate with regular troops; and without each man is kept between two marines, it's a hundred to one if a stray pig coming within hail of the detachment is not sufficient inducement to make every man rush forward to secure so savoury a prize: a flock of geese are irresistible. Sailors are very fastidious in their food. Ham and eggs may be esteemed the first delicacy; after which, a roast goose has no rival. The march was along the shore, which was sandy, hot, and tiresome; but on these occasions, the more difficulties, the more annoyances which occur, the more fun is found in the sailors. As the pass was at some distance, and the boats cleared away any obstacles in the shape of the enemy, the men, although kept in some degree of regularity, strolled a little, and talked a great deal.

"Holy Father!" said an Irishman, who had trotted over every bog in the county of Sligo, "here's a footing for a gentleman,—it's as much

as a duck could do to waddle over this sand—bad luck to it!"

"Form two deep!" roared General Craig.

"By my soul, I'm too deep already!" said another, up to his knees in the loose, hot sand.

"Why don't you march together?"

"March! do you call it?—It's much more like a hop. Oh, bad luck to the day I ever came for a sailor, to be turned into a soldier!"

"Nonsense—nonsense!" said a good-humoured sergeant, who attempted to keep the men in some order; "we had a sail with you, and now you'll have a march with us. Cheer up, Paddy; we are all of one party—all in the same boat!"

"In the same boat, Mr. Sergeant, we may be; but can you tell us how we are off for *skulls?*"

Not even Bowling could help smiling at this, although he was not in a laughing humour: whilst in his own element he had no fears for any result, but on shore he knew he could not keep his men up to military discipline, or make soldiers of a crew who hated the very idea of a lobster. If ever a first-lieutenant

wants an effective punishment, without appearing to be inflicting it, let him only practice the culprits at the small-arm exercise, and he will succeed more effectually than all the bright polishing, or all the oakum-picking in the world. It is almost impossible to make sailors understand a march and counter-march; and you may drill them as much as you like, but directly the fun begins, in the shape of firing, they will set to work their own fashion, and blaze away at random.

In the meantime, the ships were not idle; they followed the boats in shore, and took up good and effective positions. They soon succeeded in getting well within range of the Dutch camp, after having driven the enemy from two very commanding positions. In vain the gallant General Craig used his utmost endeavours to share in the glory of driving the enemy from their camp. The seamen, now impressed with the necessity of military discipline, acted well in concert with the soldiers, and marched merrily along. The fire of the ships at last drove the enemy from their camp, which

was afterwards taken possession of by General Craig, who, in spite of all exertions, could not reach the spot in time to co-operate with the ships.

The Dutch, driven from their camp, took up an advantageous position on a ridge of rocky heights, not far distant from the field of battle; but they were not long indulged with the idea of security. The advanced guard of seventy-eight, supported by the battalion, drove them from the heights, and the position thus gained was of great importance to the British forces. Now all was joy with the sailors on shore. They began to understand their work; and although, as the Irishman observed, they were only paid for fighting on board a ship, they had no objection to a liberty-day on shore, to assist their friends in any amusements.

The Dutch began to fear for the loss of the settlement. The steady advance and the continued success of the enemy had damped a little of the hope which inspired them with a belief of the security of their positions. The object was now evidently Cape Town. The British were

within six miles of that situation, and General Sluysken saw the necessity of active operations; he therefore reinforced his troops with all his disposable force from Cape Town: eight field-pieces were brought forward, and a vigorous attack made to regain the lost positions.

As the Irishman said, now comes the fun. The first battalion of seamen were under the command of Bowling; and seeing the enemy advance, he recommended his men to look to their muskets rather than the sand on which they walked. Bowling had crossed the water with his battalion, supported by Major Hill and his marines. The Dutch warmly saluted them, but no shot was returned, and considerable discipline and coolness were exhibited by both seamen and marines upon this trying occasion. The enemy, after manœuvring some time, made a desperate attempt, which was perfectly frustrated by the intrepidity of Bowling and his party; and the result was that the Dutch were defeated in all points, and retired. From the 8th of August to the end of the month the Dutch made frequent attacks; and having met with

some partial success, their General meditated one grand attack upon the British camp, which would, if successful, free him from his enemies, and drive them to their ships again. During this time, the seamen had undergone continual drillings; they could march with some steadiness, although all attempts to begin, at the beginning, "the goose-step," were unavailing.

There can be no doubt but the British were in a very perilous situation. It was evident their force had been considered too weak to advance, and delays on shore are sadly against the habits of the seamen; besides which, in several of the late skirmishes the enemy had had the advantage, although that advantage was trifling. He now came forward with sixteen pieces of artillery, and a strong reinforcement of Hottentots, to settle the question. The English were resolute in maintaining their position, and the night previous to the attack was by both parties employed in preparing for the morrow. At daylight, every thing was bustle and activity; and each moment was a moment of anxious suspense. The soldiers, accus-

tomed to the scenes of preparation, seemed to consider the affair as one of an ordinary nature; whilst the seamen betrayed the utmost anxiety to rid themselves of the worst part of a battle,—the expectation of it,—by immediately commencing hostilities.

No attack was made. General Craig, who was well aware of the intention of the enemy, wondered at the delay; but the Irish sentinel soon explained the cause.

"Come forward, is it you mean, your honour? It's not Slyskin who'll come forward this blessed day. He's making a starn-board already, and does not like the look of that flate in the offing."

"Fleet in the offing!" reiterated the General.

"Flate in the offing, your honour; and where's the wonder, when they've all got masts and sails? They are much better off the Cape, I'm thinking, than we are on it."

The Dutch General had seen the fleet. There were no less than fourteen sail of East India ships, wonderfully resembling ships of the line, crowding all sail for the anchorage in Simon's Bay. It was perhaps more necessary

now than ever for the Dutch to make their attack, and drive back the 78th Regiment and the sailors, before the attack was made on them by the increased numbers in the ships; but the tide, which generally only flows once in all affairs of war, was neglected, and each party remained on their respective grounds.

By the 14th the troops were landed, and provisioned for four days. The seamen, with their usual zeal and resolution to overcome difficulties, dragged the cannon through the heavy sand; whilst a division of the squadron weighed and ran into Table Bay, making a diversion in the rear of the enemy.

General Clarke, resolving upon an immediate attack upon Cape Town, marched the whole force forward, as if determined to end the war at one stroke. The Dutch, seeing this dauntless front, began to retire towards Cape Town; no sooner, however, did the open bay become visible, than the detached ships of the squadron were seen entering it. With a powerful enemy in front, a harassing foe in the rear, and his men wavering from a knowledge of the surrounding

position of the British forces, the Dutch General asked for forty-eight hours to settle the terms of capitulation.

Time is uselessly allowed when one party are at the gates, and those inside first offer the flag of truce. It was evident from the request of General Sluysken that he was check-mated; and Clarke, who was anxious to secure the enemy, now within his grasp, allowed only twenty-four hours for the terms of capitulation.

Half that time would have been sufficient. All the parade and nonsense of garrisons walking out with their flags flying and arms displayed, is like giving a child a sugar-plum to prevent its crying. There is no fear of an enemy being baked and eaten by the victors; and what difference can it make if a garrison lays down its arms and surrenders outside of a town, or if they surrender at once, when all retreat is cut off, and all chance of defence gone? It is a little bit of the humbug of war, left from by-gone days, as ear-rings and necklaces are the remnants of savage life.

Thus fell the town and colony into the hands

of Great Britain; and as the General had refused to put it under the *protection* of the British government, the latter took the liberty of taking it altogether, and they have very carefully maintained so eligible a position ever since.

When, after millions had been slain that Napoleon might stand on the top of the pillar in the Place Vendôme, still looking down upon the nation he once made great, and the balance of power was held in the false hands of diplomacy, the different conquests for which Great Britain had fought and bled were again restored to the different nations from which they had been wrested, the Cape, with one or two other important places, were retained; and throughout the whole war it would be difficult to name a more important situation, which fell into our hands.

There had been but very trifling fighting in the reduction of the Cape, and the army under General Alured Clarke had suffered very inconsiderably; but there were some killed and some wounded. Amongst the latter was a tall, well-looking young man, who had received a flesh-wound in the leg, and lay on the ground waiting

to be carried like a gentleman, instead of hopping on one leg, like a school-boy at play.

Bowling, seeing this officer in no very comfortable situation, called two or three of his men, and desired them to lift the gentleman carefully, and convey him to his tent, which was near at hand; whilst he ordered another seaman to run for the surgeon who had been landed from the America.

"You are not much hurt, I hope, Sir?" said Bowling.

"Not much," replied the officer, with an especial dandy intonation; "the ball has passed through the calf of my leg, and will be, I fear, detrimental to exertion during the shooting season."

"That's the season, your honour," said the Irishman, who seemed to be, like his countryman's bird, in two places at once, "that's just over, and which, bad luck to it! spoilt the calf of your honour's leg." Then, calling to a comrade, he added, "Tim, go to the gen'lman's head, you're the strongest of the party; it will take eight of us to lift the length

of him, not to mention his honour's boots. Aisy, boys, aisy; kape his head up. Now then, lads, lift handsomely together, and away we go to the tent. Tim, you butcher's baby you! make a circumbendibus, and let the gen'lman put his best foot forward; you would not let him go into the tent, sure, like an ox to the shambles, head-foremost?"

"I think the less you talk, Mr. Irishman," said the officer, "and the more you work, the better; and I'll trouble you to walk as evenly as you can."

"Gently, boys, gently; his honour ain't accustomed to horse-exercise—you see he's no spurs to his boots. By my soul, here's the doctor with as many knives as would cut up the salt junk for the dinner of a frigate's ship's company! Your honour had better be put on the table at once; he's the cleverest man in the univarsal world, and you'll be fit for Chelsea in ten minutes."

The officer was placed, from preference, on a cot which was on the ground, the amputation-table, at which Paddy in revenge had hinted, not being at all in accordance with his views.

"What is the matter?" said the surgeon, as he approached.

"Nothing particular, your honour," interrupted Paddy. "The gen'lman's got a shooting season in his leg."

The wound was examined: the ball had passed, as the officer said, right through, leaving a flesh-wound of little or no importance, save the temporary pain, the confinement, and, above all, the necessary abstinence, which must result before a cure could be effected.

Bowling's party having been commanded back to their ships, in order to get the squadron into Table Bay, he was on his march before the officer had been placed in his tent; and on the Irish seaman rejoining him, he was sent back to attend upon the wounded gentleman, and on his removal to bring down to Table Bay the cot and other articles. The officer would just as soon have seen the devil as the Irishman; but he soon learned to appreciate the kind-hearted fellow, who, although he was not sparing of his words, was ever ready to go through any fatigue to comfort the officer, notwithstanding that he was as fretful under the necessary restraint

and confinement as a newly-caged canary-bird.

"What's your name?" said the officer, rather hastily.

"It's Patrick O'Leary, to be sure, as if all the flate did not know *that;* and now could your honour be afther returning the compliment, by informing me of your own beautiful name?"

The officer smiled as he said, "I am Captain Augustus Cæsar Cornish."

"Holy Father!" said O'Leary, in an Irish whisper, "here's names enough to beat the Dutch Governor, any how!"

CHAPTER XVIII.

IN WHICH SOME TROPICAL AMUSEMENTS ARE SHEWN TO THE READER.

Captain Augustus Cæsar Cornish was not in mourning when he arrived at the Cape. He was supposed to be a single man; and, from his own confessions, generally wheedled out of him with considerable ease, was with the women one of the most successful men in England. For this qualification he certainly possessed many requisites; and his commanding figure made him an especial favourite with the majority of the sex.

The heat of the Cape was likely to draw out some of his rosiness, whilst the musquitoes always fed luxuriantly during the time he remained in the tent, situated on the sand, from which, at sunset, these tormenting devils rise by thousands. Bowling had no musquito-curtains; he had few luxuries, but plenty of the requisites for war; and Patrick O'Leary, in answer to a question from the wounded captain, as to what kind of a man his master could be to do without curtains, replied, "By my faith, your honour, the captain's a man very fond of music!"

If all the annoyances of tropical climates were heaped together, what an encouragement it would be for young men of good fortune to emigrate, and leave the luxuries of England, in the great cause of serving their country! The weakening heat of the day passed, the partially revived exile sits down to dinner. No sooner has the steam of the soup arisen to the beams above, than down comes a cockroach into the savoury mess, and away goes the soup untasted. No living creature but a mongoose

can relish a cockroach; and cockroach Madeira is a bestiality at which point few can arrive. The continued dance of St. Vitus, occasioned by the incessant bites of those tiny blood-suckers, the musquitoes, keeps the healthy part of the company in a fever of excitement; whilst along the beams myriads of ants,—insects which sometimes take the liberty of attempting to colonize the stranger's person — swarm above the head, and crawl along the decks.

Suddenly a rush, like the noise of many winds is heard; it is a flight of amatory cock-roaches, attracted by the light,—they fly with the rapidity of partridges;—the candles are extinguished—the nasty things stick in the hair of your head—fly against your face—get inside of the waiscoat, and all—ay, every idea of the most common comfort, is in a moment put to flight. Half starved, from the inroad of the harpies, who defy extinction, and who increase and multiply and replenish the ship in spite of the most revengeful warfare waged against them by every boy in her, who each morning is obliged to muster with a certain, not

insignificant, number of either the insects or their eggs, the exhausted exile seeks oblivion in the luxury of sleep: he walks the deck of his cabin for a moment without slippers, to cool his feverish feet. The enemy, ever watchful, at once seizes his opportunity. The jigger fastens itself upon the skin; it digs its way through the outer cuticle; it establishes an habitation, as rabbits burrow in the earth, and fearful indeed are the consequences of allowing these intruders to remain unmolested,—amputation has been sometimes resorted to, and mortification has more than once ensued. With this enemy, who so cautiously attacks his victim that he is perfectly unconscious of his harbouring such a foe, the bed is resorted to; and there, even in spite of O'Leary's music, the exhausted man believes himself partially relieved from the unceasing annoyances of the day.

The feeble light of the sentinel's lantern enables him to discern something black just over his face; his weary eyes can only discover that it moves. The man, overcome by lassitude,

dozes; and something falls upon his face. He rises at the unwelcome salute; but whatever it might have been, it has disappeared. To sleep again, he again closes his heavy eyes; but a curious sensation, resembling a scratch and a tickle, disturbs him once more. He feels something which crawls up his arm, having found a cheerful warmth by making its way to the skin through the opening at the wrist; hastily unbuttoning the wristband, he turns up his sleeve in some dismay—and there, cased in its saffron mail, the long centipede, dragging with it its hundred feet, is seen pursuing its slow pace towards the neck. If it stops even for a second, it bites—and then come pains and aches which would defy the leaden power of sleep.

With cautious but trembling hand he flips the nasty vermin from his skin; but there it still is, alive, and crawling in his cabin, and may, before the night is past, mount the bulkhead, and, crawling along the beam, again be attracted by the heat, and again endeavour to nestle on his arm. The musquitoes, in the

meantime, buzz about his ears, and not unfrequently, as if determined to be noticed, force themselves within the entrance. The cockroaches crawl, the ants creep, and all nature seems alive, whilst man solicits repose. A strange sail is reported at daylight: ever alive to the service, the anxious officer jumps from his cot—he encases himself in his clothes—he thrusts his foot into his shoe; a sharp sting soon obliges him to retreat; he shakes the shoe to find the hidden enemy, when out falls a green scorpion, and, curling his tail aloft, as if in defiance, and shewing itself ready for attack though eager for retreat, the poisonous reptile skims along the deck. Then follows all the effects of the venom—"A bolt of ice runs hissing through the veins, and now again he burns;" the tongue is quickly projected and returned to the mouth; an excruciating pain shoots up the leg, fever instantly attacks the patient; and whilst occupied in remedying the evil in one foot, the crafty jigger, or chigoes, is enlarging its habitation;—innumerable eggs

are deposited, and a growing and a serious malady is gaining ground.

Does he, to avoid these annoyances, seek the shore—alas! they are all bred on shore. It is but a colony that has emigrated: the mother country swarms with unhealthy population. If to cool himself he tries the water, the greedy shark, the terrific alligator, the sword, cat, dog, and pikefish, are all on the look-out to attack him. He turns to the shady grove—the speckled snake is everywhere in his path; the viper hangs from the tree; the venomous spider descends as it spins its attenuated web; the fleas, flies, musquitoes, ants, wasps, hornets—a myriad of moving devils—hunt him from his repose, and make even the yellow fever insignificant.

To a man who has basked in luxury on the happy shore where all the most serious of these annoyances and dangers are unknown, the knowledge of the enemies amongst which he is destined to live makes his life one of care and uneasiness. Some indeed have been frightened at the descriptions, and died of their fears—others have returned in the packet which con-

veyed them to the unhealthy shores ; and some, eager to avoid the calamity, have had recourse to precautions which have suddenly failed, and ultimately proved their worst enemy. It requires a man of some nerve calmly to bear these evils; the fretful predispose themselves to fever ; and the idle loiterer in the sun, or the moon's rays, courts the malady.

After Cape Town had fallen, and all the nonsense and parade of the surrender had been gone through, Cornish was placed in a cart, drawn by bullocks—a most uncomfortable carriage for an invalid, being so very rough and slow in its motions—and was conveyed to a convenient house, for which he paid a handsome rent. Money was no object; he had plenty of that most requisite article. And now, placed on a comfortable couch, everlooking Table Bay, he enjoyed all the luxuries of his new habitation. In his usual forgetfulness, or rather ingratitude, he had never even asked the name of the captain who had lent him his tent and his servant. As Captain Bowling had quite enough to do without wasting his time on morning visits, he

allowed a fortnight to pass without encumbering the patient with any more of his attentions.

At the termination of this time, the officers of the army proposed to give a grand dinner to their worthy coadjutors in arms. The utmost harmony prevailed between the two services, and an entertainment of this kind was not likely to lessen it. Cornish was resolved to be present; indeed there was no reason why he should not: his wound was sufficiently well to enable him to walk, and common temperance was all that his medical adviser required.

It was a grand spread; the table was honoured by the attendance of General Sluyskin, and all the captains of the East India ships then in the bay. The army, the navy, foreigners, civilians, and captains, all were present; and certainly on that occasion no one could complain of the want of liberality in the donors of the feast. The best wines were sent from the ships—English mutton was also provided in capital order; and, in short, everything from turtle to yams decorated the table.

No man looked more at his ease than General

Sluyskin. He sat on the right of General Clarke, and on the left of the Admiral. His government had passed from him — all his honours and glories had faded away; the old man had changed from governor to captive, yet nothing could rob him of his cheerfulness. He had done as much as could have been expected from him; he had yielded when all resistance was useless, and with that composure that a brave man ever experiences, he regarded his captors. Bowling looked at him with admiration; and in his manner observed the greatness of his mind. Cornish was astonished that he should condescend to shew himself before his conquerors as a kind of wild beast exhibition. This soldier, although brave, for no one ever doubted the animal courage of Cornish, had not that high opinion of moral courage which marks the superior man. Cornish would have sunk under what he would have called the disgrace of the defeat, or have died in making an useless resistance, surrounded by his gallant band, who might have said, as the French Guard at Waterloo, "We may die—but we will never

surrender." He might have won golden opinions from some, in perilling the blood of his soldiers when the battle was won; but men who judge differently, and who draw a just line between bravery and desperation, would censure, and properly censure, the useless waste of life that must have ensued, had he continued an obstinate resistance. When Sluyskin's health was drunk, and every officer, out of respect for the former Governor, rose as he offered the toast, he made a reply in which the above argument was the groundwork of his speech; and he finished by declaring, "The brave man knew when to surrender, and when further resistance would be criminal."

It was the remarks which followed this speech that first elicited a conversation between Cornish and Bowling; indeed Bowling had not recognised in the gaily-dressed Cornish the wounded man he had served. Bowling was warm in his admiration of the temper of Sluysken, and espoused his sentiments; whilst Cornish, to make the argument closer to his feelings, asked if he would not sooner his ship had sunk under

his feet than surrender, as the Vengeur did with her crew on the 1st of June, 1794.

Bowling's reply was looked for with much interest by the younger officers of the army. He was known to them all, in spite of the benevolence so strongly marked in his countenance, to be one of the most daring fellows in the service.

"In the first place," he said, "Sir, you have misstated the circumstance of the Vengeur; and most certainly nothing would tempt me to imitate so bad an example."

"Bad an example!" interrupted Cornish; "why she went down with her crew on board, and they, waving the tricoloured flag, even as the ship was disappearing, shouted 'Vive la republique!' The action was fought only last year, and we are all acquainted with the *facts*."

"I should think not," said Bowling, coolly; "and for one I am quite sure *you* are not acquainted with the facts."

"Sir!" exclaimed Cornish.

"Sir," said Bowling, as he quietly placed on his plate a piece of pine apple, "suppose you give me time to state *my* facts before I state

my sentiments. The Vengeur, it is true, was sunk in Lord Howe's action, and it is equally true that the French flag was waved as she sunk; but you have forgotten to state, that so far from this being a proof of determined resistance to the last, it was merely the exhibition of a few men, all totally devoid of danger by their being drunk, and that over their heads was an English flag waving in the breeze, which their comrades had hoisted as a proof of surrender, and as a signal for assistance; that, so far from the crew being at all anxious for the unenviable distinction you have so lavishly bestowed, not more than fifteen men, and they were too intoxicated to avail themselves of the chance of escape, sank in the ship. Captain Reverdin and all his crew, with the exception of the fifteen, availed themselves of the first opportunity, and saved themselves.* Now these are

* There is a fine painting by a Monsieur Léon Morel Fatio, in the Louvre, on this subject; he has fallen into a complication of errors. The Vengeur is sinking with at least five hundred men on board. The ship is perfectly dismasted, and no English flag is seen; but on the poop

my facts; and in answer to the question put to me as to what I should have preferred, I answer, that when resistance is vain, it becomes criminal, as the General said in his speech, and no man has a right, from a false feeling of honour, to sacrifice the lives of brave men, who gallantly defend themselves as long as resistance is attended with any hope of escape or conquest. When you cannot save the ship, she is lost under every circumstance, but the crew may be saved to serve their country again, perhaps with better success."

"I really cannot agree with you," said Cornish; "I really cannot."

"Perhaps not; but allow me to ask you one question. When I found you the other day lying wounded on the sand, unable to move from loss of blood, perfectly helpless as to the smallest resistance, if I, instead of being your

there are about two hundred persons, all pointing to a tricoloured flag, and all going down with the greatest possible satisfaction. He has been misled by the author of "Les Victoires et Conquêtes," who is as erroneous in his description as the artist.

friend had been your foe, and had come raging with fury to destroy all I could of my enemies, would you have said, ‘ By all means stick me, poke me through and through with that long pike; put me like a frog upon a spit; make a kabob of me; transfix me on a skewer to be fried?’ or would you have said, ‘ I surrender, spare my *life?*’ ”

“ I take this to be personal, decidedly personal; and I am at a loss to imagine how I have drawn on myself such an insult.”

“ Insult,” said Bowling, good-humouredly, “ that is rather too good. You ask me a question, and I answer it in a straightforward manner. I put the same question to you, and you shelter yourself under the assumption of an offence you must know I never could have intended.”

“ *Shelter!*” said Cornish, to a young ensign close to him; “ by Jove, he said shelter! As if a man got under an umbrella to shelter himself from the attack of the rain, or behind a tree to shelter himself from a storm. By the Lord Harry, he shall never say I sheltered myself

from him. You will be my friend, of course. These young captains of cockle shells are mighty bumptious, and require some bleeding."

Bowling caught just enough of the words to comprehend their meaning; and although he was the braver man of the two, and possessed more coolness and discretion, he took no notice of the expressions whatever; but, turning to the president, asked permission to give a toast. The president gave his consent, and Bowling rose.

CHAPTER XIX.

IN WHICH ARE TWO MORE SONGS FOR THE AMUSEMENT OF THE PUBLIC, AND TWO OLD ACQUAINTANCES GET UP A LITTLE AMUSEMENT FOR THEMSELVES.

"MR. PRESIDENT," said Bowling, (as he in reality began his *first* speech, and might have continued with "unaccustomed as I am to public speaking,") "I feel a little alarmed even at the pleasure I had anticipated in proposing the toast which you have kindly given me permission to offer; but it is a toast I feel confident will be received by us all—all, *I hope,*" (he repeated, looking towards Cornish, whose upper lip was turned up with a sneer, whilst his

whole countenance betokened the hope he entertained that the speaker would break down,) "with the sincerity it is offered. In all great undertakings, Mr. President, where the union of the two services is requisite, there is nothing tends so much to the success of the enterprise as a good and proper understanding between every officer engaged in it. In these times envy and jealousy should be laid aside; we should all be prompted by one determination, that of acting in concert, so that success may not be endangered by any ill-feeling. If there had been dissension amongst us, could we ever have hoped to have overcome that gallant and excellent officer on your right, even had our force been more numerous, and we had been enabled to hem him in on every side? Had we not acted in concert, his gallantry, and talent in availing himself of every favourable event, might have occasioned a very different result. As in public, so may it ever be in private life,—may the two services (I mean no disrespect to that gallant, that enterprising corps, the marines, in which we both merge)—may the two services,

Mr. President, ever be united in friendship and cordiality; and may no jealousy sever us in public, or any hasty expression promote discord in private life. Mr. President, I give, with your permission, ' The Union of the Services.' "

It was perfectly impossible even for the fire-eating Captain Cornish to pretend not to understand the application of the toast, and the delicate manner in which Bowling had held out the hand of reconciliation in his reference to the union of the services in private life. He was, however, in high dudgeon, and would, had not the stream of applause been too strong for him to contend against, have manifested a kind of parliamentary disapprobation of the sentiments. The president himself returned thanks for the toast; and, in conclusion, gave " The Navy." It is customary on such occasions for every officer of the other service to name every officer of the profession present, and to say, " Your health." This was the touchstone on which to test Cornish's intention; and he, mad that his adversary had obtained some notice from all, most studiously omitted Bowling.

Bowling saw the storm brewing; and as he could not reach the friendly port to which he had attempted to steer, he shortened sail to meet the squall with coolness whenever it might attack him.

In the meantime the senior officers retired with the Governor, and left the entertainment to be carried on by the younger men, all of whom, with the exception of one, were in very high spirits, and in capital humour. It might have been supposed that the room was an area for the practice of public speaking; for as the wine circulated freely, the imaginations of many of the company got a little confused, and arrived at that pitch when the speaker has a thousand brilliant ideas, but the words become clogged together, the idea escapes before it can be expressed, and twenty speeches were begun without one being properly terminated.

There were several Dutch officers present at the beginning of the feast; but as they could not understand the language when the speakers were sober, they felt they were now only wet blankets over the fire of conviviality, and re-

tired. The president, who had superseded General Clarke in the chair, availed himself of this opportunity of withdrawing, and it became necessary to elect another to fill the situation.

There was a very cheerful expression of countenance about Bowling. He had naturally high spirits, and his dark eye flashed with delight at any witticism. In his youth he had drunk enough of stronger liquor than claret to accustom him to take a very large quantity of that wine without getting inebriated. He was known to sing a good song, that is as far as the music was concerned, the words being always his own, and the subject nearly the same. Every one seemed to look at him, and there was a simultaneous desire expressed that he should fill the chair. Many persons present were aware he had stepped up the ladder by his own exertions, and the gallant manner in which he captured the fort at Martinique had been of course mentioned by his officers, who felt a pride in serving under a man so distinguished for his bravery. Cornish, when he saw his enemy thus promoted by the company, rose to

withdraw; but one or two of his regiment, who carried sail with some difficulty, held him firmly by the arm, and desired him not to leave a society to the pleasures of which he could so largely contribute.

"By the Lord Harry, Apollo!" said one of them, "we will have half-a-dozen songs out of you, and we shall have a grand account of all the girls who have been desperately in love with you, from the first Fanny to your black-eyed Susan in Devonshire. There's no fun without you, so, as our friend in the chair would say, bring yourself to an anchor."

Bowling distinctly heard the mention of black-eyed Susan in Devonshire; and although there might have been some hundreds of Susans, all with black eyes and all residing in Devonshire, the name awakened in him some very uncomfortable feelings in regard to Cornish. The latter gentleman was perfectly cool and sober; for throughout the whole evening, when others had become a little excited and, after numerous toasts had been drunk, a little bordering on the uproarious, Cornish, for once in

his life, had kept steady and been reflective. He saw before him his brave companions in arms, no longer under the fear of restraint; but, the bridle being removed, they galloped in unrestrained liberty.

In all dinner-parties of this kind, there are some of the company who forget their situations as officers, and become, in a trifling degree, loose and disorderly; and now, even in spite of Bowling's presidential restraint, the song and the anecdote got adrift and became *loose*. Bowling sang the first strain. In all his songs the heart seemed resting on a distant hope; and although he had cheered up, in by-gone days, the roughest sailor on the Saturday night by some allusion to gales and battles, yet even in the very first songs he had written there was always a lurking after Susan, and in every one he had ever penned her name was in some part of the verse. He sang the following to the tune of "When at war on the ocean we meet the proud foe:"—

"When the wind swells the canvas, and strong is the breeze
Which drives our brave ship o'er the far-distant seas;

If we see but a speck on the ocean's white foam,
We think of old England—we think of our home.

For there, in that island, the pride of the brave,
Whose flag rides in triumph o'er every wave—
Who is great in her court, in her camp, in her mart—
There dwells the fond maiden, the pride of my heart.

Oh, grant me, kind Heaven! that girl for a wife,
Whilst the sun-rise of health gives me vigour and life;
And constant I'll be from the day that I wed,
For Susan, dear Susan, shall pillow my head."

"That's not a bad song," said the young officer who had detained Cornish; "it seems odd, though, that both sailors and soldiers should all tumble in love with Susans. I say, Apollo, my boy, what is the other name of your Susan? Yours is 'The Susan;' for yours is a reality. Captain Bowling's, I fancy, is a poet's imagination."

"Not quite," said Bowling, "not quite. I have seen a girl of that name, but it's many years ago. It's more than eight years since I put my foot on the English shore; so that whether my Susan has grown up as pretty as she promised to be, or has made a stretch on the

other tack and skimmed along the ugly shore, are points on which I am in total ignorance."

"I *do* know a Susan," said Cornish, with most particular emphasis, "and I flatter myself she knows me. There never was a prettier girl born in old England; and as far as black eyes are good towards making a handsome woman, with smooth, glossy, raven hair—the most even and white teeth—features as regular as if they were chiselled by that old Greek (I always forget his name)—with a smile upon her cherry lips, and good humour on her features—with a figure as beautiful as was ever created for the admiration of man, I know her to be exquisitely lovely; and, poor girl, I think I may add, without incurring the imputation of flattery, my absence is not congenial to her wishes."

"Don't get Cornish in his loves, or we shall never hear another song," interrupted a veteran captain, whose bent had long since been fixed upon promotion rather than on woman. "Let's have 'Corporal Scamp.'"

The young man thus called upon for the song was the friend of Cornish, but as different from

him as light from darkness, a kind of proof that extremes *do* meet. With a good-humoured acquiescence he filled his glass, and sang the following rather opposite opinion to the one expressed in Bowling's song:—

"Corporal Scamp, Corporal Scamp,
Was the greatest rogue in all the camp.
If he saw pass by
A dark black eye,
Or if it was blue, or a lighter shade,
Scamp tried for a kiss from the pretty maid.

It chanced one day, as he happened to stray,
He met a nun who was running away.
All hooded in black,
She never looked back;
So Scamp caught the fugitive round the waist,
And softly whispered, 'Why in such haste?'

She never spoke, but away she broke,
Without once deigning to cast a look:
Her course she bent
To an officer's tent,
Who was teaching recruits to 'shoulder arms,'—
Who forgot his love in his war's alarms.

The corporal's feet were nearly as fleet,
His heart and his pulse were at fever heat:
It's youth's pretty face
That can run such a pace.
'Hark, hark!' cried the figure, 'I hear the tramp,
The coming step, of that Corporal Scamp.'

He entered the tent, and at once he went
To gratify his heart's content:
The hood's thrown back—
He gave her a smack—
Then he bit his lips, and he cursed his life;
The amorous nun was—the corporal's wife!"

"Hah, hah, hah!" laughed the old captain. "That's just the reason I never married. I should always be afraid of kissing my wife by mistake."

"Or of her kissing another," said Cornish. "For Susan, dear Susan, shall pillow my head," he hummed aloud. "Rather pretty that; sentimental withal; and most especially in accordance with my feelings!"

"Who the devil is this Susan?" said the old captain. "I fancy, Cornish, you are like Corporal Scamp, after every pretty girl in your parish."

"Oh, she is nobody of any birth, parentage, or education. She tumbled from the clouds, I believe, and was taken, as a matter of charity, as a companion to a sick young lady; a kind of pretty piece of furniture, when worn out to be changed or discharged, or hired at discretion; a piece of sticking-plaster, when it has served its destined turn, to be thrown aside; a—"

"Oh Lord!" interrupted the veteran; "she's like a woman, isn't she?"

"Yes; and a prettier woman than Susan Monckton does not exist."

"Sir!" said Bowling, "who did you mention?"

"Who?" replied Cornish (who, having nursed his hatred for Bowling, was quite pleased at the prospect of ripping up an old quarrel, or establishing a new one), "why Susan Monckton, the companion of Rosa Talbot; the paid attachée to her petticoat; and a young woman I have honoured by my protection."

So completely was Bowling overcome by the heaps of insults thus lavishly, thus unexpectedly thrown upon his own Susan, that he remained perfectly silent. He felt a cold shiver run over him, and was on the point of leaving the chair, when he was recalled to his duty by a rather intoxicated cornet proposing "The health of Susan Monckton," Cornish's beauty.

A general cheer followed the proposition, for in Susan Monckton all the sex was included; and this toast, "Women," is and was, ever since the army of England has existed, the toast best received; for as none but the brave deserve the

fair, and all soldiers are presumed to be brave, it followed that they only drank what they deserved. The evening was setting in for a *wet* night; a vast number had already begun to speak rather thick; one young gentleman was getting sentimentally lachrymose; another was beginning to make very indifferent puns, and nearly fell into hysterics as he laughed aloud; but all were sober enough to drink their favourite toast in a brimmer, the rose in the middle attesting that the glass would not hold a drop more without running over. Even Bowling, who was now a very respectable imitation of inebriety, inasmuch as he could not bring his mind to any subject, mechanically filled his glass.

"Women!" he exclaimed.

"Susan Monckton!" said Cornish, aloud; and scarcely had the glass touched the lips of Bowling ere it fell from his hand, and he most unceremoniously deserted his post—ran to his boat—and, having gained the Echo, retired to his cabin to brood over his misfortunes.

END OF VOL. I.

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